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## LITURGY - SPIRITUALITY

EDITORIAL

DOCUMENTS ON SYRO-MALABAR LITURGICAL REFORM

- Congregation for Oriental Churches-Rome

SOME LITURGICAL PRINCIPLES FORGOTTEN BY THE SO CALLED

SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH

- Koonammakkal Thoma Kathanar

BOOK REVIEW, NEWS

Vol. XV

Nos. 2, 3



# CHRISTIAN ORIENT

An Indian Journal of Eastern Churches for Creative  
Theological Thinking

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## LITURGY - SPIRITUALITY

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### Book Review, News.

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# Editorial

## Syro-Malabar Church and Liturgical Reform

The Constitution on Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* of Vatican II is perhaps the most misunderstood and hence misinterpreted Church document in recent decades. It is particularly true in the discussions on the restoration, renewal and adaptation of Liturgy. Among the innumerable instructions on liturgy subsequently published the recent one: *The Roman Liturgy and Inculturation*, issued on the 25th of January by the Congregation for Divine worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, confirms this observation.

It is curious to observe that the Post Vatican II documents on liturgy employ stronger categories than it was wont to correct the liturgical abuses, unwarranted deviations and arbitrary experimentations as is evidenced by the various instructions given by the Congregation of Rites, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments through documents such as: *Eucharisticum Mysterium* of May 25, 1967; *Memoriale Domini* of May 29, 1969; *Liturgicae Instaurationes* of September 5, 1970; *Immensae Caritatis* of January 29, 1973; *Dominicae Cenae* of 24 February, 1980; *Inaestimabile Donum* of 3rd April, 1980; Apostolic letter of Pope John Paul II, *Vicissimus Quintus Annus* of 4th December, 1988 etc. A few quotations from some of the above documents may be quite in place here.

*Liturgicae Instaurationes* states:

"Liturgical reform is not synonymous with so called *desacralization* and should not be the occasion for what is called the *secularization of the world*. Thus the liturgical rites must retain a dignified and sacred character.

The effectiveness of liturgical actions does not consist in the continual search for newer rites or simpler forms, but in an ever deeper insight into the word of God and the mystery which is celebrated. The presence of God will be ensured by following the rites of the Church rather than those inspired by a priest's individual preference.

The priest should realize that by imposing his own personal restoration of sacred rites he is offending the rights of the faithful and is introducing individualism and idiosyncrasy into celebrations which belong to the whole Church." (no.1)

The document also affirms that it would be a serious abuse to replace the word of God with the word of Man, no matter who the author may be. (no. 2/a)



The instruction *Inaestimabile Donum* says:

But these encouraging and positive aspects cannot suppress concern at the varied and frequent abuses being reported from different parts of the Catholic world: the confusion of roles, especially regarding the priestly ministry and the role of the laity (indiscriminate shared recitation of the Eucharistic Prayer, homilies given by the lay people, lay people distributing communion while the priests refrain from doing so); an increasing loss of the sense of the sacred (abandonment of liturgical vestments, the Eucharist celebrated outside church without real need, lack of reverence and respect for the Blessed sacrament etc.) misunderstanding of the ecclesial character of the liturgy (the use of private texts, the proliferation of unapproved Eucharistic prayers, the manipulation of liturgical texts for social and political ends). In these cases we are face to face with a real falsification of the Catholic liturgy: "One who offers worship to God on the Church's behalf in a way contrary to that which is laid down by the Church with God-given authority and which is customary in the Church is guilty of falsification". (*Foreword*)

*Vicissimus Quintus Annus* after eight years observes:

Since liturgical celebrations are not private acts but "celebrations of the Church, the 'sacrament of unity'", (SC 26) their regulation is dependent solely upon the hierarchical authority of the Church. (SC 22, 26). The Liturgy belongs to the whole body of the Church. (SC 26). It is for this reason that it is not permitted to anyone, even the priest, or any group, to add, subtract or change anything whatsoever on their own initiative (SC 22). Fidelity to the rites and to the authentic texts of the liturgy is the requirement of the *lex orandi*, which must always be in conformity with the *Lex credendi*. *A lack of fidelity on this point may even affect the very validity of the sacraments.* (no. 10)

The Apostolic letter makes the following observations on the erroneous applications in liturgy:

On occasion there have been noted illicit omissions or additions, rites invented outside the framework of established norms; postures or songs which are not conducive to faith or to a sense of the sacred; abuses in the practice of general absolution; confusion between the ministerial priesthood, linked with Ordination and the common priesthood of the faithful, which has its foundation in baptism. (no. 13)

It continues:

It cannot be tolerated that certain priests should take upon themselves the right to compose Eucharistic prayers or to substitute profane readings for texts from Sacred scripture. Initiatives of this sort, far from being linked with the liturgical reform as such, or with the books which have issued from it, are in direct contradiction to it, disfigure it and deprive the christian people of the genuine treasures of the liturgy of the Church. (n. 13)



Cultural adaptations are absolutely necessary in liturgy lest it should die of stagnation.

"But then it is very important to know, first, whether all these changes express the Church's *rule of prayer* in equal measure, and second whether it is possible to find in liturgical development itself some law, something which in fact makes it a development of the age old and immutable *lex orandi* and not just a series of more or less accidental metamorphosis"<sup>1</sup>.

The document *Roman Liturgy and Inculturation* has the following to tell those engaged in the reform of liturgy:

Before any research on inculturation begins, it is necessary to keep in mind the nature of the liturgy. It "is, in fact the privileged place where Christians meet God and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ" (cf. Jn. 17,3). It is at once the action of Christ the priest and the action of the Church which is his body, because in order to accomplish his work of glorifying God and sanctifying mankind, achieved through visible signs, he always associates with himself the Church, which through him and in the Holy Spirit, gives the Father the worship which is pleasing to Him" (no. 21).

The document further states:

The Liturgy is the expression of faith and Christian life, and so it is necessary to ensure that liturgical inculturation is not marked, even in appearance, by religious syncretism. This would be the case if the places of worship, liturgical objects and vestments, gestures and postures let it appear as if rites had the same significance in Christian celebrations as they did before evangelization. The syncretism will be still worse if biblical readings and chants (cf. above n. 26) or the prayers were replaced by texts from other religions, even if these contain an undeniable religious and moral value" (no. 47).

Liturgy means everything for a Christian in the Orient. It affects all the vital aspects—viz. his spiritual, theological, ascetical, disciplinary etc.—of his life in the Church. For him the Church is a community whose primary concern is the celebration of liturgy. As H. Vorgrimler in his commentary on the documents of Vatican II says *liturgy is the heart of his ecclesial life*; and it is not an appendix of the Church as Koonammackal puts it in his article in the present issue. Pope John Paul II urged the Syro-Malabar and Malankara bishops on their *Ad Limina* visit in 1985: "Inculcate the value of the sacramental realities as privileged moments and means of encountering God. *Foster a spirituality centred on the rich liturgical life of your Churches*"<sup>2</sup>. The primary purpose of liturgy is not teaching, but help the community and the individuals to enter the divine mysteries (Raze). In the Syriac Orient the word for Church

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1. SCHMEMMANN, Introduction to liturgical Theology, Eng. trans. New York-1986, p. 20.
  2. SICO, 477-481, 1986 May-September, p. 6.



(*edta*) means liturgical assembly, a congregation and an assembly met together to unite in acts of celebration<sup>3</sup>.

The western theologians make the following observation on what liturgy means to an Oriental Christian:

In the Oriental Church, the greatest source of Christian faith, besides the Sacred scripture, is the Liturgy. This is true of the western Church too, but it is more vital and living in the East. Their liturgy is much more the expression of their life than ours is. And besides that, their liturgy, due to its greater variety, contains much more of their Theology than ours does, the Oriental liturgy is a gold mine for us<sup>4</sup>.

Salaville says:

It is a fact that the Eastern liturgies, even more than the Roman liturgy form a *locus Theologicus*, or theological source which deserves to be more thoroughly worked than it has been up to the Present<sup>5</sup>.

The Church's understanding of liturgy and its teachings are often overshadowed and diluted by the novelties and by the theories and theologies of the so-called modern liturgiologists known for superficiality, arbitrariness and laxity. If someone is inclined to treat liturgy or anything connected with it as the last priority, the least important, the most irrelevant and meaningless exercise (so it appears in the discussions in various responsible forums), it is not without any reason. Louis Bouyer makes the following observations:

If the liturgy experiences deterioration through wear and tear, routine and sclerosis, it buckles even more radically under theories which owe it nothing, when people are trying wrongly to make it in accordance with them. For here we are dealing not with those errors that are mere negligences or more or less profound oversights. They are errors that are committed solemnly and on principle, and on the pretext of enrichment or reform they cripple and mutilate irreparably.

Actually it is an established phenomenon that a liturgical theology which does not proceed from the liturgy, and finds nothing really satisfying in it, soon comes up with pseudo rites and aberrant formulas. Riddled with these, the liturgy soon becomes disguised if not even disfigured. Sooner or later the feeling of incongruity in such a situation awakens a wish for reform<sup>6</sup>.

Dalmais while discussing the mystery dimension of liturgy warns the theologians:

3. Cf. L. ARANGASSERY, Ecclesial Dimensions of East Syrian liturgy, Kottayam-1990, 110-112.
4. A. MIKHLOSHAZY, East Syrian Eucharistic Pneumatology, Rome, 1968, 8-9.
5. S. SALAVILLE, An Introduction to the Study of Eastern liturgies, p.74.
6. L. BOUYER, Eucharist: Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic prayer, Notre Dame-1968, 8-9



Theologians, therefore, have no right to find fault with their (of the Liturgy) vagueness, use of metaphor and for example their practice of giving Scripture passages a meaning different from the literal sense...Theologians must put themselves inside the categories proper to cultic and social accomplishment of the mystery of salvation if they are to derive from the liturgical data all the fruits these are capable of providing.<sup>7</sup>

The abuses in the liturgical life is a great concern of the Church. Pope Pius XI who ordered the liturgical reform in the Syro-Malabar Church says:

The liturgy is the most important organ of the ordinary magisterium of the Church...The liturgy is not the didascalica of this or that individual but the didascalica of the Church.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps the abuses reported from different parts of the Catholic world are only symptomatic of a much deeper crisis: a crisis of faith and christian identity, a crisis of liturgical understanding, a crisis generated by the unsound, non-catholic liturgical theories and theologies; a crisis caused by the loss of the sense of the sacred and genuine liturgical sense, lack of the awareness of the ecclesial character of liturgy and the lost sense of the necessary connection between the *Lex orandi* and *Lex credendi*.

When the liturgical principles and the official teachings on the nature of the Church and liturgy are ignored or sidelined all the attempts of liturgical reform will naturally be guided by liturgically untenable principles. Some of these principles may be enumerated as the tendency to be satisfied with the minimum possible—prayers, gestures, postures, vestments, sacred things etc., arbitrariness, reductionism, syncretism, pre-occupation with time, private and personal conveniences, oversimplification of rituals, private theologies of liturgy etc.

The state of Syro-Malabar liturgy is not an exception to this world phenomena. In recent years it has become the subject on which every Dick and Harry has something to pronounce authoritatively. It is no secret that the Syro-Malabar Church, which was under the Latin religious colonialism for more than four centuries, is one of the most latinized Oriental Churches in the world. The influence of latin categories and thinking was so much that even after the establishment of independent hierarchy, the hierarchs of the Syro-Malabar Church in spite of the instructions of Pope Leo XIII for the preservation of the venerable traditions of the East in *Orientalium Dignitas Ecclesiarum* and other previous instructions, demanded a syriac version of the Latin Pontifical to be used in their Church. And Pope Pius XI refusing to approve the demand strongly affirmed:

Latinism ought not to be encouraged among the Orientals. The Holy see does not wish to latinize, but to catholicize. Half measures are neither generous nor fruitful. Let a commission be nominated with the task of revising the most ancient pontifical.<sup>9</sup>

7. I. H. DALMAIS, Theology of the liturgical celebration, in *Martim or Church at prayer* I Collegeville-1987, 274.

8. Quas Primas, Dec. 11, 1925, AAS 17/603.

9. PODIPARA P., The Rise and decline of the Indian Church of St. Thomas, Kottayam-1979, 43.



Since then numerous instructions on liturgy have seen light and some of them are already mentioned earlier. But still the latin categories and thinking patterns of the Syro-Malabarians have not changed. Even those who are branded as oriental "fundamentalists" do sometimes betray their undue affinity towards the western theologies and categories. The Congregation for Oriental Churches is well aware of this fact and hence its Prefect, Simon Cardinal Lourdsamy writes insisting on the urgency of liturgical catechesis for a proper understanding of ecclesial and liturgical heritage.

In this regard one can never insist enough on the need to introduce, where it does not exist, and to strengthen where it does, the study of liturgy, especially the Syrian liturgical heritage according to the best contemporary methods, and also the present day pastoral exigencies in India... Only through a knowledge of the total ecclesial and theological context of the tradition can the liturgy itself be fully understood. A similar penetration into the meaning of the liturgy should be provided to the faithful, according to their needs and circumstances, by means of a precise and regular catechesis. One should not forget the golden principle 'Lex orandi, lex credendi'. (1988 May 5).

It is the fundamental right of the faithful to know the teachings of the Church in their entirety and integrity. And it is the duty of everyone to recognize and respect this right of the faithful as affirmed by Vatican II and re-affirmed in some of the recent documents and teachings of Pope John Paul II.

"Our task is to ensure that the truth about Christ, the Church and humanity penetrate the strata of society ever more deeply, seeking its gradual transformation".<sup>10</sup>

Pope John Paul II tells the Nicaraguan bishops:

It is your function "to control, promote and safeguard the entire liturgical life" (CD, n. 5), in the ecclesial communities which have been entrusted to your care, and you must watch that the norms and directives for its celebration are diligently observed. An erroneous interpretation of spontaneity must not change the meaning of liturgical actions, especially in Mass.<sup>11</sup>

The Pope John Paul II tells the priests:

"Priests must be very aware that the faithful have the right to be taught the integral content of Revelation and the Church's Doctrine. They should therefore take pains to avoid subjective reinterpretations of the christian message, misleading ambiguities or suspicious silences that could cause disorientation or threaten the purity of the faith. These criteria should also be observed by priests who are the Church's spokesmen in the social communication media."<sup>12</sup>

10. Message of Santo Domingo Conference to the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, n. 3; *L'Osservatore Romano*, (Eng. ed) 18 Nov. 1992, p. 6

11. *L'Osservatore Romano*, Eng. March 2, 1994; n. 5 p. 3,

12. *L'Osservatore Romano*, Eng. March 9, 1994, n.4., p. 5



The recent liturgical "movements" in the Syro-Malabar Church may be characterised by a lack of the sense of the sacred, loss of the sense of the ecclesial character of liturgy. Confusion of roles in the liturgical celebrations, denial of the right of the faithful to celebrate the liturgy in its most solemn form (RAZA) etc. Indiscriminate use of unapproved and private texts, hymns etc. are the norms of the day. Systematic latinization under the pretext of inculturation and "Bonum fidelium" is the demand of the "liturgiologists" of the Syro-Malabar Church. Fidelity to the original sources has become outfashioned and the "Free-Compositions" are considered the most meaningful liturgical prayers.

How can a newly composed liturgy be the liturgy of the Church? How can a "crowd" prepare a liturgical text and that too without any fidelity to the original sources? It is difficult to understand the so called Thomas Christians who consider the oriental things as backward and the East Syrian liturgy as imposed on them when we know that their forefathers were proud of their ecclesial and liturgical heritage. They even wrote to Pope Gregory XIII in 1578 saying: "Our worship (liturgy) is in the Syriac language which was handed down to us by our Father St. Thomas. Our forefathers and we ourselves are well instructed in this language"<sup>13</sup>. The Congregation says: "But all liturgical development operates not in a vacuum, but within concrete historical circumstances and the historical circumstances of the past development of the Syro-Malabar liturgy are known to all"<sup>14</sup>.

The willingness to return to the genuine liturgical sources and traditions and appreciation of them (OE 1-6) as well as the goodness to respect the right of the faithful to a true liturgy, the liturgy desired and laid down by the Church, (*Inaestimabile Donum*) is what is needed today when the Syro-Malabar Church is engaged in reforming its liturgy. A true pastor who is concerned about the "Bonum fidelium" must be one who gives the faithful what is due to them. "Undue experimentation, changes and creativity bewilder the faithful" and as Pope Paul VI stated on August 22, 1973, "Anyone who takes advantage of the reform to indulge in arbitrary experiments is wasting energy and offending the ecclesial sense"<sup>15</sup>.

In the context of liturgical reform initiated by the order of Pope Pius XI in 1934 the Congregation for the Oriental Churches issued a few documents in 1980s giving correct liturgical principles and norms to be followed by those responsible in the restoration and reform of their liturgy. Unfortunately, the fundamental liturgical principles enunciated in these documents were either ignored or labelled as *non-pastoral* and therefore rejected thereby giving an impression that the forefathers of the Thomas Christians and their pastors were not pastoral. The protagonists of *inculturation* in reality turned out to be protagonists of *latinisation* as the Congregation deplores in the *Observations of 1983*.

It is in this context we thought it opportune to include in the present issue of *Christian Orient* the five important documents related to liturgical reform, issued by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in 1980, 1983,

13. KOODAPUZHA, "Structural evolution in the Church", Jeevadhara 1971.

14. Final Judgement, no. 8.

15. Cf. *Inaestimabile Donum*. forward.



1985, 1988 and 1989. The speech of Pope John Paul II and the two speeches of Cardinal Rubin addressing the Syro-Malabar hierarchs during their *Ad Limina* visit in August 1980 are also included in this issue. These documents have already been published either fully or partially in the past. A proper documentation of all these documents may be of help for rejecting any misinterpretation of the documents which is the style of the day. The documents of the Congregation make clear references to the rich ecclesial and liturgical patrimony of the Church as well as to the erroneous liturgical practices prevalent in the Syro-Malabar Church. It also deplores the unreflected attempts of inculturation and introduction of non-Christian scriptures, symbols and cultic forms in liturgy etc.

The document of 1980 known as *Report on the state of liturgical reform in the Syro-Malabar Church*, was sent to all hierarchs of the Syro-Malabar Church on 12-8-1980. It gives a list of the important dates in the history of the restoration and reform of the Syro-Malabar liturgy, then gives some fundamental doctrinal principles for an authentic liturgical reform and evaluates critically the two texts of the so-called Indian Mass of Ernakulam and the Indianised Mass of Dharmaram CMI Group. The document deplores the immature and unreflective attempts in these so-called Indian Masses to dilute the sublimity and uniqueness of Christian revelation by using typically Hindu, non-Christian and impersonal terms and expressions such as *OM*, *Sachidananda*, *Dharma*, *Guru God as mother*, *cosmic form of Christ* etc.

The document of 1983 generally known as *Observations on "The Order of the Holy Mass of the Syro-Malabar Church 1981"* comments on the "General, Directions" proposed by the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy and then gives general and particular observations and guidelines on the text under reform. It discusses each and every part of the liturgy in detail under 95 points. The document of 1985, known as *Final Judgement* was issued as a definitive response to the suggestions of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy with a view to put an end to all controversies and to facilitate the preparation of the final draft of the Qurbana. The observations of the Congregation in its covering letter concerning the baseless accusations made by some hierarchs need to be taken note of. The final text was prepared and it was approved by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches on the 19th of December, 1985. The text came into effect on the 8th of February, 1986 when Pope John Paul II celebrated the Holy Qurbana according to this text.

One can easily sense the deviation and departure from the established liturgical principles in the document of May 5, 1988. The very points rejected by the previous documents as latinizations are given birth in this document. Compromise is a sin. Its gravity is all the more when it is done at the expense of the affirmed and re-affirmed liturgical ideals, principles and venerable traditions of the Church. The Congregation itself in *Final Judgement* says: "Compromises can easily lead to further compromises, not always of the best type, to the detriment of the genuine characteristics of East Syrian Tradition." In the document of 1989 which was issued with the decree of the approval of the Holy Qurbana in its simple and solemn forms, the congregation seems to realize and correct the mistake. It gives some modifications and suppresses some of the options given in the document of 1988.



An article authored by Koonammackal Thoma Kathanar is also included in this issue. Koonammackal exposes some of the misconceptions concerning concelebration and certain liturgical principles forgotten by the Syro-Malabarians. Our sincere thanks to him and all those who co-operated to bringout this issue. It is our wish that the reader having gone through the pages of this issue begin to appreciate and respect the liturgical and ecclesial heritage of his own Church as well as of other Churches.

Fr. Lonappan Arangassery MST

Editor



# Report on the state of liturgical reform in the Syro-Malabar Church given by the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Rome

(Text sent to all the Hierarchs of the  
Syro-Malabar Church Rome, 12-8-1980)

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1. Restoration of the Syro-Malabar Rite: Catalogue of principal dates and Additional Note.
2. Fundamental Doctrinal Principles for an authentic liturgical reform.
3. Observations on certain points of the "Indian Mass" and "Indianised Mass" (Dharmaram, CMI Group), and related questions.
4. Conclusions to be determined.

## Restoration of the Syro-Malabar Rite: Catalogue of Principal Dates

1. **December 1, 1934.** Pope Pius XI decides on the liturgical reform of the Syro-Malabar Church. A Commission was then constituted and this prepared the *Pontificale*, which was published in 1957.

2. **March 10, 1954.** A new Commission is set up and charged with the reform of the *Missal*, the *Rituale* and *Divine office*.

3. a. **May 27, 1957.** The text elaborated by the Commission charged with the revision and re-edition of the Syro-Malabar *Missal*, comprising the *Ordo communis* and 3 *Anaphorai*, together with the observations of the Syro-Malabar bishops, is submitted to the Plenary Congregation of Cardinals, which accepts it.

b. **June 26, 1957.** Pope Pius XII gives his approval of the decisions of the "Plenaria."



**1959-1960.** The Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches sees to the publication, in Rome, of the "Ordo celebrationis Quddasa iuxta usum Ecclesiae syro-malabarensis", as well as the "Supplementum Mysteriorum sive Proprium Missarum de tempose et de Sanctis iuxta Ritum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis."

**5. May 12, 1960.** Publication at Alwaye, in Syriac and with the 'imprimatur' of Archbishop Parecattil, of the "Taksa d' Quddasa", containing the ordinary of the Mass with only the Anaphora of SS. Addai and Mari (instead of the three envisaged in n. 3a, above).

**6. January 20, 1962.** The Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches issues the *Instruction* "De ritu Sacrificii Eucharistici instaurati", addressed to the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, by which instrument the new Syro-Malabar *Missal*, printed at Alwaye, is introduced into use.

The Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches, with a view to the progressive and full restoration of the rite of Eucharistic celebration, imposed the immediate use of the "Taksa d' Quddasa" and also of the "Supplementum Mysteriorum", in Seminaries and Novitiates, while allowing those already in priestly Orders to continue using the old *Missal* "donec Episcopis aliud videatur."

**7. July 3, 1962.** By common accord and decision of the Bishops, the new *Missal* printed at Alwaye, in bilingual edition, Syriac-Malayalam, and bearing the 'imprimatur' of 7 Bishops officially comes into force.

**8. October 27/29, 1963.** To the Syro-Malabar Bishops who had made petition to introduce a certain number of abbreviations, the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches gave a motivated reply in a negative sense.

**9. December 3, 1963.** In part endorsement of a new request for a greater adaptation of the Liturgy to Indian mentality, and in consideration of the objections brought against an absolute return to the pure Chaldean Rite, the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches issues a decree that provides for some amendments and abbreviations.

**10. May 20, 1968** 'Imprimatur' of 7 Bishops given to newly elaborated text, in Malayalam only, of the Ordinary of the Mass, (here to be referred to as the 1968 text).

**11. a. August 6, 1968.** The late-lament Bishop of Trichur, Msgr. Alapatt, personally presents a request to the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches for the approval of the *Missal*, (see no. 10, above), which has already been printed.

**b. August 7, 1968.** Telegram sent to the Apostolic Nunciature in New Delhi, communicating the Sacred Congregation's approval "ad experimentum" of this new (1968) text.

**c. August 15, 1968.** Beginning of the use of the new *Missal* (1968 text), printed at Alwaye, as stated above, with only the Malayalam text, bearing the 'imprimatur' of the Bishops, and authorized only "ad experimentum".



In reality, this new text, as a result of the various changes effected in the course of translation, differed considerably from that prepared by the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches (1962), which had been previously submitted to the judgement of the Syro-Malabar Bishops, had been approved by the Plenaria (1957) and by the Holy Father himself, had been published in Kerala—in Syriac—, and was intended to be freely used by the Priests and obligatorily by the alumni of Seminaries and novitiates.

**12. May 9, 1969.** The new text (1968) gave rise to reservations and perplexity in many quarters; but the Sacred Congregation at the time thought it best to allow the experiment to take its course and, by Letter to the Syro-Malabar Bishop's Conference, dated May 9, 1969, went no further than limit the experiment to a period of two years, while strongly recommending that "universi textus liturgici in linguam quoque latinam vertantur ad usum commissionis liturgicae Sacrae Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus iuxta praxim vigentem".

**13. a. July 23, 1971.** The Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches, notwithstanding the mounting reactions and reservations against the text of the (1968) *Missal*, agreed to grant an extension of the experiment for a further three-year period, with the clause: "sine praeiudicio futurae decisionis Sanctae Sedis".

**b. 1972-1973.** In the face of the intensification of the so-called Indianization ("Indianization, a topic which is evoking lively interest today"), the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches made its mind known in the following terms: "Non quod studia et experimenta improbentur, sed curandum omnino est ut omnia fiant iuxta norms et decreta Sedis Apostolicae et sub vigilantia competentis, auctoritati, sublato quolibet abusu vel arbitrio". (August 1, 1972).

**14. June 19, 1974.** The Sacred Congregation examines the *Missal*, in English and Hindi, published by the Apostolic Exarchs in 1970. The Sacred Congregation takes note of the differences existing between this text and that of 1962 and that of 1968, and by way of conclusion establishes the following principles of action:

1. to present, as a model of the type of work desired, the 1970 text produced by the Apostolic Exarchs: it follows the 1962 text with some adaptations and abbreviations;

2. to declare the "experiment" (ie of the 1968 text) as concluded and re-propose the 1962 text (in Malayalam version), any discussion regarding adaptation etc. would have to be on the basis of this text, (1962 text).

3. to make it known that the 1968 text was judged unacceptable.

These principles were not translated into concrete measures, the Sacred Congregation preferring to wait until the expiration of the experimental period.

**15. August 1974.** "At the meeting of the Malabar Bishop's Conference, the Central liturgical Committee is authorized to form six sub-Committees each with a Bishop as President and animator. A time-limit of one year is fixed for the study of the various subjects". The Malabar Bishops' Conference further decided "to request the Holy See to extend the period of



experimentation of the 1968 Missal for three more years, since some time is found necessary to finalize the text of the Mass".

16. **December 1974.** The Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches examines the brochure published "pro manuscripto" by Dharmaram College, Bangalore, under the title of "An Order of the Mass for the Indian Church". Certain of its characteristics were immediately evident: "Among many other things, there are seen in it expressions taken from the Holy Bible, placed side by side with expressions taken from the sacred books of the Hindus".

17. **June 14, 1975.** Issue of an *Instruction* of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship addressed to the President of the C. B. C. I. (Cardinal Parecattil), aimed at prohibiting hence forth the use of so-called "Indian Mass" and experiments of abusive Indianization. In itself, the prohibition concerned only the Latin-Rite Church in India. Yet it was known that "the same Indian Mass" was vigorously being continued among the Orientals...". It is clear, however, that, in view of its motivations, which were not only pastoral but also theological, the *Instruction* in question ought to have given food for thought, to say the least.

18. **January 3, 1977.** Letter of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches to each member of the Malabar Bishops' Conference in the following terms: "The concession of the experimental phase was made 'ad tempus' to be exact, 'ad triennium'... concession subsequently extended to another three-year period, this having become necessary in as much as the definitive texts had not yet been established". "In the expectation of the proceedings of the (...) Commissions, this Sacred Congregation, in accordance with the resolutions of the Bishops' Conference, renews the prohibition against the use of new liturgical texts or compositions that lack authorization of the Bishops' Conference and the approval of the Holy See, such as, e. g., the so-called 'Indian Mass', etc..."

The Sacred Congregation, further more, called on the Bishops to express "your personal views on the subject, as well as your judgement on the laborious process of liturgical reform in the Syro-Malabar community and on certain trends or options that are more or less questionable and that are improperly encouraged in some places".

19. **June 23, 1978** After evaluation of the Bishops' replies and after receiving the query posed by the members of the Malabar Bishops' Liturgical Commission, the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches resolved to reaffirm its own position, in regard to the method and principles to be faithfully observed. This it did in the following terms:

-the *Missal* elaborated by the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches (1962) is to remain the normative and basic text, which any ulterior discussion must presuppose;

-the use in celebration of any text or liturgical composition lacking proper and due authorization on the part of the Bishops' Conference *qualis*, as in the case of the so-called "Short Mass" and "Indian Mass", is to be strictly prohibited: arbitrary innovations or such as are incompatible with sound and genuine tradition are not to be indulged in.

This time, again, the Sacred Congregation deemed it advisable to wait and observe the evolution of the situation.

**20. May 22, 1979.** The Sacred Congregation writes to Cardinal Parecattil in response to his Report on the liturgy "The mind of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches on this particular point is known. The experimental phase, at one time granted and later prorogated, must be brought to an end. Any further prorogation "ad experimentum" will certainly be detrimental'. At the same time, Card. Parecattil was asked "to forward the texts so prepared (by the commissions) to this Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches".

**21. March 14, 1980** His Eminence Joseph Card. Parecattil writes to His Eminence the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches, referring also to the state of the liturgical question.

**May 3, 1980.** H. Em. The Card. prefect of the Sacred Congregation replies in these terms:

"The letter sent to this Sacred Congregation (N. 14/RN/26/80, dated March 14 last) has come at a rather opportune moment. In fact, this Sacred Congregation would like to avail itself of the presence in the Roman Curia next June of Your Eminence and Their Excellencies the other Syro-Malabar Hierarches on their "ad limina" visit, to hold a special Meeting of the Hierarchy, under the presidency of this Sacred Congregation, in order to treat exhaustively of the problem of the reform of the liturgy, and to adopt, as is keenly desired, at the end of this long period of experimentation, a definitive solution. This Sacred Congregation will take pains to notify the individual Hierarchs, to enable them to prepare for this Meeting and to offer, each one, their valuable contribution towards a solution of so important a question.

**22. June 12, 1980.** The Sacred Congregation, by telegramme, asks His Excellency Msgr. Luciano Storero, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in India "to communicate to the Malabar and the Malankara Hierarchy that, by the August decision of the Holy Father, they are desired to be in Rome as from Monday, August 25, 1980, for their 'ad limina' visit and for the Meeting in connexion with the reform of the liturgy".

**23. June 1980.** Memorandum of 240 priests of Ernakulam regarding the state of liturgical reform in the archdiocese.

The document alludes to the various stages of the reform of the Syro-Malabar liturgy, with particular reference to the experimental "1968 Mass" and subsequent developments.

The text officially approved in 1962 is qualified as "cumbersome" and as 'having a Semitic overtone'

Notice is given of the results of an enquiry carried out in 1971 within the archdiocese of Ernakulam, by means of a questionnaire sent to all priests (regulars included) asking them to indicate their preference, whether for the "1962 Mass" or for the "1968 Mass". Of the 270 answers received 242 were in favour of the "1968 Mass", 20 in favour of the "1962 Mass", and the others were indifferent.



It is reported also that the special Sub-Committee set up in 1974 has drawn up a revised text of the Eucharistic liturgy (designated for convenience as the "1978 draft") which has as its basis the text approved in 1962.

The Memorandum requests permission to continue using the 1968 text "without any substantial change" and that any alteration be "of a progressive not a retrogressive nature".

The Memorandum is signed by 240 out of a total number of 286 priests in the presbyterium of Ernakulam: among the signatories are 5 Major Superiors of Religious Institutes. Of the priests present at the meeting 4 declined to sign; the rest of the priests were absent from the archdiocese and could not attend (from Card. Parecattil's letter N. RN 59/80, dated June 24, 1980).

24 July 15, 1980. The Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches, by letter dated July 15, 1980, replies to the Cardinal Archbishop of Ernakulam on the following terms:

"Con Rapporto della Nunziatura Apostolica del 14 luglio u. s. e. qui giunta la venerata Lettera del 24 Giugno 1980 RN 59/ 80, redatta da Vostra Eminenza Reverendissima (Card Parecattil) in attesa della prevista Riunione in Roma della Gerarchia Malabarese per la trattazione della questione degli esperimenti attuati finora in campo di Riforma Liturgica.

La Lettera di Vostra Eminenza era accompagnata da un esposto in inglese e in italiano contenente diverse osservazioni "in iure" ed "in facto" sui principi sull attuazione della riforma in cotesta Eparchia metropolitana.

Questo Sacro Dicastero non può non apprezzare un così vivo interesse di tanti sacerdoti alla riforma.

Cio dimostra come sia necessaria e providenziale la Riunione di tutta la Gerarchia per trattare così importante questione.

Come Vostra Eminenza ricorderà, il Rev. mo P. Alfonso Raes S. J., benemerito Direttore per tanti anni della Sezione Liturgica di questo Sacro Dicastero, soleva dire che in ogni Riforma Liturgica occorre armonizzare due componenti, una "intellettuale" (teologia, storia, ecc.) e una "empirica" (esigenze pastorali). La tensione dialettica tra queste due componenti transpare anche dall' esposto qui inviato da Vostra Eminenza.

Questo Sacro Dicastero sta preparando una relazione sugli esperimenti compiuti come base per la discussione, al fine di trovare. 'Deo adiuvante', una linea concorde di impostazione per una riforma teologicamente sicura e che incontri l' approvazione di tutti.

Sarebbe sommamente auspicabile che nelle varie Eparchie, ed in specie presso gli Istituti religiosi, si tenessero particolari preghiere per il felice esito della Riunione in programma'.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTE

For greater completeness of the "Catalogue of principal dates", it has been considered useful to attach the following items, mostly of recent date:

- Two important statements of H. Em Card. Parecattil at the Synod of Bishops, in relation to liturgical reform.

Recent reports on the unsatisfactory condition of the Syro-Malabar liturgy:

- Last minute appeals for the Holy Father's personal intervention.

## **Two important statement of H. E. Cardinal Parecattil at the Synod of Bishops in relation to liturgical reform**

a) **October 4, 1971** - Speaking in his own name in the discussion "De sacerdotio ministerial", His Eminence had occasion to bring up the question of cultural adaptation.

He cited a phrase used by the Sacred Congregation "de Propaganda Fide" in 1659 in its instructions to missioneries in China: "Portate illic vestram fidem, non vero vestram regionem".

He also cited a passage from one of Pope Paul's speeches at Kampala (July 31, 1969): "The mode of manifesting this one faith may be manifold; hence it may be original, suited to the tongue, the style, the character, the genius and culture of the one who professes this one faith."

Also, a passage from a broadcast message to the people of Asia: "In fact, the Church, by virtue of her essential Catholicity cannot be alien to any country or people", etc.

He concludes: "Sacerdos hodierni temporis profundam scientiam acquirere debet nont antum suae religionis, verum etiam culturae, traditionis religiosae et omnium divitiarum spiritulimn et moralium suae patriae".

b) **September 30, 1974** - speaking on "Indigenisation and Evangelization" Card. Parecattil asserted that one of the reasons why the Church in India has met with limited success was that "Christianity, owing to its Western garb, is being looked upon as a foreign religion".

He referred to the adoption by Fr. Matteo Ricci of certain Confucian rites (first approved by Alexander VII and later forbidden by Clemant XI) and to the efforts made by Fr. Roberto de Nobili in the field of adaptation and acculturation.

Card. Parecattil also spoke favourably of the introduction of readings from non-Christian Scriptures into the Divine office and even in the Eucharistic celebration, while noting, however, that the time was not yet ripe for this.

## **Recent reports on the unsatisfactory state of the Malabar liturgy**

1) **Report of a liturgical expert (January 19, 1979).** The author communicates impressions after visiting India (1974 and 1978), with reference to the state of liturgical reform in Kerala.



He notes the many Latin elements that appear in the "1968 Mass"

He further notes that a number of "Indian" liturgical formularies or "Indian" anaphoras have made their appearance among Latins and that such "Indian Masses" have, unfortunately, been used in some Malabar eparchies who continue to use them, even after their prohibition by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship.

He deplores the divisions caused among the Bishops by these new formularies, and the confusion and dismay generated by them and by the lack of a uniform guiding-line.

**2) Report of another expert (January 23, 1979).** The author reports that the Rector of St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Kottayam, speaking on November 4, 1978, to an assembly of professors and students, deplored "the present sorry state of our liturgy".

He points out that various texts of the Eucharistic liturgy or *Qurbana* which do not have the approval of the hierarchy, are being used among them, a Mini Mass and an "Indianized Mass" composed some years back by Dharmaram College (C.M.I), Bangalore.

He too, deplores the division reigning in the liturgical field: some being for renewal according to strictly Eastern Christian tradition; others being open to everything the Eastern Christian tradition, supple but authentic; others the majority, do not have a set opinion, in part atleast because they are not interested in the reform in a serious and persevering fashion.

He notes that the hierarchy has not succeeded so far in reaching a clear accord. Hence confusion among clergy and laity.

### **Last minute appeals for the Holy Father's personal intervention**

**1) A Syro-Malabar Bishop (June 19, 1980).** In a letter addressed to the Holy Father, the author deplores the fact that some Bishops and priests, including religious, "under the pretext of renovation and inculturation, have taken too much liberty in matters liturgical, very often neglecting the traditions of our Oriental Apostolic Church and even the teachings and instructions of the councils and the Holy See."

He points out that "unauthorized liturgical books have been prepared in the vernacular (some also in English and other Indian languages) and are used regularly in several places" a practice which has caused scandal, a state of liturgical uncertainty and has been harmful to faith.

He informs also that an unqualified body has *inter alia* prepared and published an "unauthorized and mutilated Text (Ordo) of the Syro-Malabar liturgy, and it is used in many parts of India".

He requests the Holy Father's personal intervention in such an important and critical matter.

**2) 40 Syro-Malabar priests (June, 26, 1980).** After a summary account of the history of the Syro-Malabar Church with particular reference to the liturgy,

and to the measures taken by the Holy See since Pope Leo XIII for restoration and consolidation in its hierarchy and in its authentic ecclesial heritage the signatories deplore the present state of the liturgy, the lack of unity and uniformity, the divulgation of unauthorized texts, the drastic changes introduced under the pretext of modernization or pastoral adaptation. They deeply deplore the use of the so-called "Indian anaphora" and abridged forms of the (experimental) "1968 Missal", and the recently advertised "Indian Mass" on April 12, 1980, at Malayattoor in the presence of a great concourse of pilgrims.

## Fundamental Doctrinal Principles For an Authentic Liturgical Reform

Before passing to the detailed examination of particular features of the so-called "Indian Mass" of Ernakulam and of the "Indianized Mass" of Dharmaram College, Bangalore with regard to both of which we have serious reserves, it is desired to establish certain basic principles by way of a doctrinal premise which should be acceptable to all the Hierarchs.

It must be understood that it is the task of the Syro-Malabar Church to achieve a double intergration: 1) in an *Eastern Christian* and 2) in an *Indian* direction.

Only on this basis can a sound liturgical reform expression and sign of authentic cultural and spiritual recovery be pursued: a reform directed at the attainment of a greater "truth" and "relevance" in the celebration of the mysteries and prayer of the Church.

It has been pointed out that crisis around the liturgy in the Malabar Church is not only a high-point but a revealing and conspicuous one of a much vaster and involved theological and spiritual debate investing the Catholic Church today, so that it would be a mistake to lose sight of this pan-Indian dimension.

It would seem that the crux or supreme point of the contemporary theological debate in India concerns Christology, the absolute character and centrality of Christ. It has now become almost commonplace among many to oppose the "historic Jesus of Nazareth" to the "cosmic Christ", "Jesus Christ" to the christic mystery"; the "historic revelation of Jesus" to the "illumination of the Word."

In the same context, one notes, too, a certain undervaluing for inappreciation of the theological value of the Patristic tradition. Only a deeper, stronger link, made of faith, knowledge and love, with tradition of the Fathers—especially, of their *own* Fathers—will enable these Churches to find themselves again and to rediscover the beauty and richness of their liturgies.

In some quarters, it is held and taught that non-Christian religions are "complementary" to Christianity and that they are no less true than Christianity, since Christ operates in all religions. In the same vein, some authors in India are inclined to recognize in non-Christian scriptures a divine origin and inspiration, and desire to use such scriptures in the



liturgy. In the consciousness of the originality and dignity of the cultural and religious traditions of India, individuals or groups have elaborated its proposals and programmes for the "inculturation" of Christianity; but many of these attempts have been unsuccessful and unfortunate, nor have they been conducted with the necessary safeguards and with sufficient preparation.

It has, therefore, been considered useful to set out the following doctrinal points, in the persuasion that they are shared by the entire Malabar hierarchy.

1) "Liturgia Ecclesiae Malabarensis fidelis omnia manere debet traditionali Liturgiae Syro-Orientali, maxime in celebratione Sacrificii Eucharistici, idque ad normam Decreti Conciliaris "Orientalium Ecclesiarum" n. 6. conlatis quoque n. 5 et n. 12".

2) Nonnisi ratione proprii et organici progressus mutationes inducendae sunt (ibidem)<sup>1</sup>.

3) Sicut nouo potest dari Ecclesia "autogena", sed semper debet ab alia praecedenti derivari, ita non datur Liturgia "autogena".

4) "Nullatenus inducantur mutationes ultra vel contra principia vel normas directorias in Epistula Pontificia "Dominicae Cenae" diei 25 Februarii 1980 (Cf. A. A. S. 72) 1980. pp. 13-148).

a) Etenim haec Epistula, est *pruesertim* Ecclesiam Latinam attingat, principia et normas continet quae absque dubio etiam pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus *ratione rei* valent. Hoc etiam eruitur ex quodam ipsius Epistulae; nempe ubi dicitur:"

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1. Commoditatis causa praefati numeri: hic exscribuntur:

12. Veterem disciplinam de sacramentis apud Orientales Ecclesias vigentem, itemque praxim quae ad eorum celebrationem et ministrationem spectat, Sancta Oecumenica Synodus confirmat et laudat, et, si casus ferat, exoptat ut eadem instauretur.
6. Sciant ac pro certo habeant omnes Orientales, se suos legitimos ritus liturgicos suamque disciplinam semper servare posse et debere, ac nonnisi ratione proprii et organici progressus mutationes inducendas esse. Haec omnia, igitur, maxima fidelitate ab ipsis Orientalibus observanda sunt: qui quidem harum rerum cognitionem in dies maiorem usumque perfectiorem acquirere debent, et, si ad iis ob temporum vel personarum adiuncta indebite defecerint, ad avitas traditiones redire satagant.
5. Historia, traditiones et plurima ecclesiastica instituta praeclare testantur quantopere de universa Ecclesia Orientales Ecclesiae merita sint. Quapropter Sancta Synodus patrimonium hoc ecclesiasticum et spirituale non solum aestimatione debita et iusta laude prosequitur, sed etiam tamquam Patrimonium universae Christi Ecclesiae firmiter considerat. Quamobrem sollemniter declarat, Ecclesias Orientis sicut et Occidentis iure pollere et officio teneri secundum proprias disciplinas peculiare regendi, utpote quae veneranda antiquitate commenduntur, moribus suorum fidelium magis sint congruae atque ad bonum animarum consulendum aptiores videantur.

“Quae singula constituamus ante oculos necesse est nobis praesertim Ecclesiae Romanae Latinac sacerdotibus, quorum ordinationis ritus progredientibus saeculis addidit consuetudinem sacerdotis manus unguendi” (n. 11).

b) “Quapropter omnino vitandae sunt mutationes quae laedant aut minuunt indolem sacram et naturam sacrificalem Euchuaristiae”. Videantur praesertim hi textus:

8. “Eucharistiae celebratio iam inde a cenaculo et Ultima Cena suam prae se fert historiam tam longam ut Ecclesiae ipsius, qua quidem volvente historia in elementa secundaria certae quaedam mutationes sunt inductae; verum tamen *nihil mutata est essentia Mysterii*, quod mundi Redemptor eadem in novissima Cena constituit”. (n. 8)

“Eucharisticum enim Mystrium si a propria seiungitur sacrificali et sacramentali natura, plane id esse cessat. Nam haud tolerat ullam imitationem “profanam” quae facilli ne transire possit, quin immo fere semper, in Profanationem. Reminisci hoc usque oportet maximeque fortasse hic temporibus, cum animorum inclinationem dispicimus ad discrimen submovendum inter “sacrum” et “profanum” cumque percubuit fere iam ubique studium (quibusdam saltem in locis) auferendae sacrae ommum rerum qualitatis.

Hic ergo in adiunctis *necesse ex suo officio Ecclesiae est tulari atque confirmare ipsum Eucharistine “sacram”* (ibidem).

9) “In primis autem est Eucharistia sacrificium: redemptionis videlicet eodemque tempore sacrificium Novi Foederis” sicut credimus nos ac manifesto profitentur etiam Ecclesiae Orientis; plura quidem abhinc saecula Ecclesia Graeca docuit: “hodiernum sacrificium sic profecto est ut illud quod olim unigenitum incarnatum Verbum obtulit, ab eo nunc hodie ut tunc offertur, cum idem sit unicumque sacrificium” (n. 9).

Maturescit autem et increscit eucharisticus cultus cum precis eucharisticae verba ac nominatim consecrationis magna cum humilitate ac simplicitate ita efferuntur ut intellegi possint, secundum suam sanctitatem, modo pulchro et digno; cum actus hic primarius eucharisticae liturgiae sine festinatione fit, cum opera vere datur tali collecti animi attentioni ac pietati tali ut participes sentiant mysterii excelsitatem, quod peragitur, idque se gerendi ratione ostendant”. (ibidem)

c) Pariter observandae omnino sunt “necessariae proprietates” (n. 12)

1) “Meminerint autem semper omnes intra textus Missae Lectionum ingredi posse solum Dei verbum. Pro Sacrae enim Sacripturae usu minime potest aliorum textuum recitatio substitui, quantumvis magna bona religiosa et moralia illi forsitan prae se ferant. Possunt contra tales lectiones utilissime in homiliis adhiberi. Nam homilia reapse perquam idonea est ad illorum textuum usum, dummodo necessariis doctrinae postulatis et condicionibus respondeant, quoniam ipsa homiliae natura eo spetat, ut, praeter alia, illuminet convenientiam inter divinam revelatamque sapientiam ac praestabilem, humanam cogitationem, quae variis viis quaerit veritatem”. (n. 10)

2) “... *In tuto semper locetur dignitas sacra ministerii eucharistici attusque ille spiritus eucharistica communionsis*, quod non tantum est



peculiare bonum Ecclesiae uti Populi Dei sedetiam particularis simul hereditas nobis relicta ab apostolis, a variis liturgicis traditionibus et a tot generationibus fidelium, qui saepe fuerunt teste Christi heroici, in "Schola Crucis" (Redemptionis) et Eucharistiae educati". (n. 11)

3) "Prohibeat a nobis Deus mores reverentia vacuos, inopportunam festinationem et impatientiam scandalum inferentem. Summus enim in eo consistit honor noster quod praeter officia nostra circa munus evangelizationis-exercemus talem potestatem arcanam in Redemptoris Corpus; proinde omnia in nobis ad id pentius dirigantur oportet". (ibidem)

d) Atque haec tandeme probe meditanda sunt, ad hoc ut Eucharistia sit revera "fulcrum unitatis".

"Bonum totius Ecclesiae commune est Eucharistia tamquam unitatis eius sacramentum. Quam ob rem tenetur areto officio Ecclesia omnia constituendi quae ipsius respiciunt celebrationem ac participationem. Gerere nos ergo debemus secundum principia a novissimo Concilio praestituta, quod nempe in Constitutione de Sacra Liturgia circumscripsit ac praefinivit auctoritates obligationesque tum Episcoporum in propriis dioecesibus tum Episcopopalium Conferentiarum, quandoquidem hac et illi in unitate collegiali cum Apostolica Sede agunt.

Accedit quod normae variis a Romanae Curiae Dicasteriis emissae pariter sunt hic servandae: tum in re liturgica nempe in regulis per liturgicos libros statuis de mysterio eucharistico necnon in in eadem mysterio dicatis Instructionibus tum in iis quae pertinent ad "communicationem in sacris", "Directorio de reoecumenica" et "Instructione de peculiaribus casibus admittendi alios christianos ad communionem eucharisticam in Ecclesia catholica" sancitis. Etsi praesenti in statu renovationis liturgicae relictus est locus liberae "creatrici" cuidam operae, debet tamen illa districte obedire postulatis substantialis unitatis. Qua in pluralismi via, ut aiunt (qui ceterum iam extortus est ex variarum linguarum usu in liturgiam inducto), eatenus tantum progredi licet quatenus necessariae proprietates celebrationis Eucharistiae non tollantu quatenusque obtemperetur legibus recentiore liturgica renovatione praestitutis

Necessaria ergo ubique adhiberi debet diligentia, ut intra ipsum cultus eucharistici pluralismum, a Concilio Vaticano II piopositum, ostendatur unitas, cuius signum Eucharistia est et causa" (n. 12)

### **Observations on Certain Points of the "Indian Mass" and the "Indianized Mass (Dharmaram- CMI Group)" and Related Questions**

I The texts of the "Indian liturgies" which have been adopted in Oriental milieux (the "Indian Mass", and the liturgy composed by the CMI of Dharmaram College, Bangalore) are in themselves unacceptable.

From the DOCUMENTATION

#### **1) "Indian Mass"**

a) From the rites of preparation:

"O Creator of the universe, May we offer these flowers, to which you gave odour, colour and beauty, as token of our humble homage to thy Divine Majesty";

b) From the liturgy of the word:

"Lead us, Lord, from unreality; from darkness to light; from mortality to immortality";

c) From the anaphora:

1) "As Supreme Teacher and Master, he imparted the words of eternal life to the poor and humble of heart. He went about doing good";

2) "Bless the efforts of all those who labour to build our country into a nation, where the poor and the hungry...";

3) "We and the whole creation give to you, God of all, Father of all...";

4) "YOU are the fulness of Reality, One without a second, Being, Knowledge, Bliss!";

2) "CMI Liturgy"

a) From the rites of preparation:

1) "Om!"

2) "Saccidananda"

3) "YOU God, Thou art freedom way"

b) From the liturgy of the word:

1) "We want to become prophets of thy eternal word, which is the foundation of the Holy Scriptures, the inspiration of the sages, the hope of the brahmacharin"

2) "O Lord Jesus Christ, true guru of all the world".

c) From the anaphora.

1) "You have created the world in a primordial act of self-sacrifice"

2) "You are for us father and even mother"

3) "Through the prophets and restorers of the dharma, You have revealed in various ways the message of salvation".

4) "You have given us Thy Holy Spirit, to make us capable of realizing You in us"

5) "We live in the expectation of the vision of your cosmic form"

6) "This sacrifice has reconstituted the harmony of the cosmos and the dharma"

7 "This is the divine food descended from heaven: in it dwells the divine presence, which strengthens the soul with incomparable nectar; we can immerse ourselves in this divine presence and lose ourselves in it".

d) From the rites of communion:

"We can be the bearers of immortality! Lord of fulness, dwell in us. You are our refuge, you alone are the end of our life".



## OBSERVATION

## 1) General observations

a) These two liturgies certainly cannot be considered a reform or an organic development of the Syriac liturgies: in fact, they preserve neither the structure, nor the tone, nor the spirit.

1) The "Indian Mass" is largely inspired by the "Order of the Mass for India" published -by Latins and especially for Latins- at Bangalore (the anaphora, in fact, corresponds almost literally to that of the "Order of the Mass"-the use of which has been prohibited by the Congregation of the Sacraments, on 14. VI. 1975-, in its "short form").

2) The liturgy composed by the CMI-praised by Cardinal Parecattil, v. introduction to the German version; and the article in the "St. Thomas Christian Encyclopaedia, p. 190-while still preserving numerous. Oriental elements, places these in a totally different context, where such elements are suffocated or acquire a different meaning.

b) In both the liturgies, one notes the use of non-Christian scriptures: only one text verbally reproduced in the "Indian Mass" (which, in the "long version" of the anaphora, which better explicitates the spirit, contains some twenty expressions taken from the patrimony of Hindu scriptures), while numerous expressions appear in the liturgy composed by the CMI.

It must be noted in this regard that such a manner of using non-Christian scriptures is even more deplorable than that of actually proclaiming them: because in this way they are placed in a yet closer relationship with the mystery of the Eucharist (they are not only listened to, but directly assumed in the Eucharistic Prayer!) and also because -fused and integrated, as they are, with other formulae -they are no longer "isolable" and thus there is no possibility of "checking them and of placing oneself before them in a critical attitude.. Even if short, such formulae in so far as they sharply distinguish themselves from analogous Biblical formulae-inevitably, in themselves, bear the meaning and the connotations of the original context which they directly evoke.

## 2) Particular observations

(on points referred to in the "documentation")

## 1) INDIAN MASS

a) The only offering that we today can present to God, who "takes no pleasure in sacrifices and holocausts", is that of Christ, in whom we too are included and is included all reality. The "offertory" itself of bread and of wine is not so much the "offering" of these elements as their "presentation" to God, in order that, in virtue of His benediction, they may become fit to be transformed into the body and blood of Christ. The offering of Christ is there fore, the reality and the substantial "sign"-the only adequate one- of our offering and of our adoration.

b) This prayer - in itself very beautiful- is taken from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (13, 28). It echoes Col. 1, 12s, but with a difference of capital, and by no means casual, importance: in Col. it is recalled how God has taken us out of the power of darkness, while here it is simply

asked that He draw us out of the darkness. In point of fact, God has already drawn us out of unreality, darkness, and death: possessing Christ we are in the supreme reality of the new creation we have eternal life, we are become sons of the light. Now, the Eucharistic Prayer, to be in keeping with our Faith, must express these marvels accomplished by God for us and not be so formulated as if these had not yet come about.

It must also be noted that in the original context well-known to all of the Upanishad from which the prayer in question is taken, the unreal, the darkness and death, are nothing but the phenomonic world, in which we are immersed as long as we are drawn along in the cycle of rebirths and from which we are liberated by knowledge of its merely apparent existence and our identity with the Brahman.

c) 1. The presentation of the ministry of Jesus made in these terms is too unilateral and limited: besides being Teacher, Jesus has also been a thaumaturge, showing by the signs that He accomplished the fulfilment in Himself of the prophecies and anticipating in this way of "doing good" the new grace that would flow from the Redemption. In fact, the text of Acts 10, 38 continues: "... went about doing good and curing all who had fallen in to the power of the devil".

2. This prayer, very good in itself, is not in the right place. In those intercessions, in fact - in the middle of the anaphora- the intention is not so much to commemorate the Authorities (first of the Religious Authorities, then of the civil: so it appears, inevitably, from the way in which the prayers are put together) as to make supplication for the Church, in its structures and its charisms.

3. Undoubtedly, the whole creation gives glory to God: but this it does, in the Eucharist, through us, who have been inserted into Christ the Unique and Supreme Priest. For this reason, the conjunction *and* is inappropriate.

4. In the Indian context, impregnated with Hinduism, to call God "the Fulness of every Reality" remains somewhat ambiguous. In a cultural and spiritual milieu wholly dominated by the category of the undifferentiated and which has such great difficulty in distinguishing between God and universe, this formula is to be avoided.

Besides, to reduce - as is here done - the proclamation of the Trinity in the three terms "Being, Knowledge, Bliss" especially in the liturgical celebration, which is quite a different matter from reflexion of systematic theology-is, *intellectualistic* and abstract. We cannot introduce into the liturgy - in substitution of an Aristotelian scholasticism an Upanishadic scholasticism. The People of God has the right to call God by the three Names by which He has revealed Himself: and above all, has the right and the duty to do this at the supreme moment of the Eucharistic doxology.

## 2) CMI LITURGY

(a) 1. The "Om", according to what innumerable passages of the Upanishads continually and repeatedly affirm is the synthesis of all the Vedas and of all the "gnosis" of Hinduism. Not withstanding the attempts made in various quarters to offer an accommodated Christian interpretation, it remains



so strongly qualified in a Hindu sense, is charged with meanings so unmistakably Hindu, that it simply cannot be used in Christian worship. "Om" is not a revealed name of God. Besides, if even the Old Testament tetragramme itself can no longer be used, how can this syllable, so charged with special meanings and with ambiguity, be used to invoke God? Moreover, "Om" is an essential, integral part of Hindu worship. Thus, also Ouseparampil (in *Journal of Dharma*, Oct. 1977, 439-459): "OM is the most important tri-syllabic symbol in Hindu tradition. There is no action, no prayer started and ended without uttering Om ( ). Om is the "seed-syllable" of the universe, the magic word *par excellence*..., the primordial sound of timeless reality. (...) Therefore the Brahnavadins start their sacrifices, charity and penance and all other scriptural actions after first uttering the word Om. (...) Om is the root of the tree of the Vedas (...) There is no other word in the Hindu world which has given rise to such high philosophical, theological, ritualistic and sectarian.

"Om", in the CMI liturgy occurs very often, and it is the way by which God is there habitually addressed.

2. On "saccidananda" (= Being, Knowledge, Bliss) see above. But in the original Sanscrit it has an even more formal connotation, being compounded in a single name: it is all the more suggestive, and therefore all the more unacceptable as a formula of worship.

3. The term "way" has been referred by Christ to Himself, and it expresses admirably his reality of "mediator" ("no one can come to the Father except through Me": so in the context of Jo. 14, 6.) To attribute the term without further qualification to "God" is, therefore, inexact, it does not correspond to the norm of the language revealed in the Scriptures, and is not free of possible - seriously erroneous interpretations, especially in a Hindu context (where the personal God is, precisely, the way to the undifferentiated).

(b) 1. The eternal word subsists in the revealed word, that is, in the Holy Scriptures. The formula used not only fails to put this truth into sufficient evidence (Scripture is the word of God) but associates, without distinguishing the different levels, Scripture with the works of the "sages" (inspired by the eternal word?)

2. The term "guru" does not correspond to the "Didaskalos" of the New Testament: the term has, in fact, a very precise connotation, altogether in keeping with the entire Hindu tradition (it is not without reason that the term is untranslatable!). We cannot define or describe Christ in terms which are not revealed, or by using words bearing so technical and so compromised a connotation.

(c) 1. The primordial act of self-sacrifice is very well-known Hindu myth which serves, above all, to present the world as "the members of God" and, therefore, as indistinct from Being as such. The author of *Gen. I* was well aware of analogous myths of the Babylonian world, but was careful to avoid making them his own in his account of the creation: indeed, it is the sacred writer's direct intention to place himself in opposition to those myths.

2. It is clear enough, as well as revealed truth, that God loves us more than a mother. This however, does not enable us to call Him, in

the liturgy above all, "our mother". The term "father", to be exact denotes not only the reality of His unspeakable love but – first of all and essentially the fact that we are become one thing with Christ, who is the Only-begotten son of the eternal Father. It is not permissible for us to change the terms which designate this mystery, simply in order to assume categories of Hindu theology and spirituality, or something from the religiosity of Ramakrishna.

3. "In various ways" God has revealed Himself through the prophets, according to the prologue of *Heb*; to extend the attribution of this revelation also to the "founders" (English version) or to the "restorers" (German version) of the Dharma (the mythical avatars or the founders of religions) is absolutely unjustified and arbitrary. Besides, the term "Dharma" itself is too markedly qualified in the Hindu-Budhist sense (dharma, in the Pali texts) as primordial cosmic law to be received as integral part of the proclamation of the mystery of revelation, in which the will of God – His "law" is unmistakably qualified or connotated in a sense at once *personal* (–it is the will of the Personal God!), *salvific* (it is ordered the mystery of the Redemption) and *Christological* (it is prophecy of Christ by Christ it has been fulfilled, assumed, resolved and brought to full perfection).

4. In a context impregnated with Hinduism, the "capacity of realizing one self as God" is a spiritual category only too well known, but which has a meaning vastly different from the "divinization" the Holy Spirit accomplishes in us. To take up this language means to equivocate and to make believe that realities antithetical in themselves are one and the same thing.

5. The truth is, we are in expectation to see the glorious Christ. The "cosmic form" (in the German version "cosmic manifestation") is an ambiguous expression which could lead persons especially in the Hindu context, or in that of a certain contemporary Indian theology to think of a cosmic Christ different from the Christ in the flesh. The Christ who will return is Jesus of Nazareth.

6. Apart from the resumption of the term "dharma" (which, placed side by side with that of "cosmos", yet more clearly evidences the technical meaning referred to above). It is necessary to point out that the Eucharist does much more than "reconstitute the harmony of the cosmos". It is the new creation, which incomparably transcends the first creation and totally "transforms" it; in this sense, the Eucharist is the "end" of cosmic reality rather than its reconstitution or its "apokatastasis".

7. Even this parlance ("necter") and these categories ("immerse us... lose us", "dissolve us", are typical of Hindu tradition. It is clear that they can have a sense in which they would be true: but in the Hindu context they are already far to be compromised; and their obvious sense consistently with Hinduism, is altogether different and incompatible with Christianity (we do not at all dissolve in God: and all talk of "Christian advaita" is charged with equivocations and is unacceptable).

Besides, this is not the true sense of the Eucharistic Communion, which is essentially "sacrificial", that is to say, the communion with Christ who offers Himself, so that He might offer us together with Him.



Enunciated in this particular context, without being counterbalanced by other more exact formulae, these phrases appear to express categories more gnostic than Christian.

(d) Here again, a particular stress or slant, not balanced by the meaning of the Eucharist as "a dwelling in us" of Christ: at the same time giving a strange echo of modern devotionalism and hinduizing theology ("Lord of fulness"...).

II It is necessary that the Oriental Churches of India rediscover their own *raison d'être*, and set themselves on the road of a double integration: in an "Eastern-Christian" and in an "Indian" direction.

## EXPLANATION

1. The Churches of India, while showing such vitality and fervour, are undoubtedly and self-confessedly-undergoing a deep crisis, which can be defined as a "crisis of identity".

On the one hand, -and this applies to the whole Christian community of India, (not only Catholic) — Christians feel themselves quite legitimately and totally "Indian"; but at the same time they are forced to recognize in their culture too many elements "imported" (in some cases, really imposed) from outside. We refer here not simply to those elements which are essential to Christianity, which is always and inevitably "Semitic" in its roots, and is also characterized by the cultures through which it has passed, especially in the age of the Fathers, to the extent that it is henceforth inseparably connected with such cultures. But there is much more "than this: there is a westernization" of colonial type, of a type which is estranging and unjustified and which is visible in innumerable elements that make up or colour the life of certain Christian milieux (particularly, among the clergy and the more "evolved classes").

In this connection, it is often said in India today that Christians want to be not only "Christians and Indians", but somehow to fuse these realities in one, thus to become "Christiano-Indians". This desire, especially if it is not simply passion dominated cannot but be considered as fully legitimate, and, indeed, a duty,

Now this, to use a current expression, "crisis of identity" is combined, in the case of Eastern-Rite Catholic communities, with a difficulty in understanding and accepting (i. e. perceiving its intrinsic value and its own deep justifications) their "Christian Easternness", recognizing this as their own authentic vocation, and of totally assuming it in its own spiritual tradition and in its own life.

2. This situation - which is not to be considered as tragic or irretrievably anguishing, but which must be tackled with seriousness and without delay - clearly demands that every effort be made to ensure a double integration:

(a) the integration of the Eastern Rite with authentically Eastern spirituality and theology: that is restoring to the Eastern Rite its natural and necessary complement and context, its sources, as the Council puts it. Now, this cannot be achieved without serious study and without acceptance

in depth of the liturgical and patristic heritage, of which the Eastern Rite is a privileged expression. For this purpose, also a certain renewal of knowledge of Syriac would seem to be absolutely indispensable, as well as numerous other initiatives and programmes designed to make such immense treasures of wisdom and holiness better known and loved and lived; by the bishops themselves, the clergy and the people who, one cannot doubt of this, is avoid of these true things and who will be capable of appreciating them with enthusiasm and of receiving them with immense fruitfulness.

(b) the integration with the culture and the tradition (better: into the cultures and the traditions) of India. This is in view of the necessary "inculturation", by which is meant the assumption of the more solid and sounder realities which these traditions contain, and which so unmistakably characterize the authentic physiognomy of the Indian people.

The "assumption" of the realities that characterize Indian culture implies necessarily serious study and understanding of Hinduism, especially through a mature contact with its manifold sources. Hinduism being, as rightly insisted upon in many quarters, a fundamental component of this culture, it will be necessary, in this work, to bear always in mind that:

1) There are inseparable and radical differences between the ethico-religious perspective of Hinduism—of any Hinduism—and that of Christianity.

It does nobody any good—and is contrary to the truth—to pass under silence or pretend to ignore such differences, cutting out for oneself a Hinduism according to one's wishes, made out to suit Christianity, or accumulating false "parallels" which cannot convince anyone, and which manifest only superficiality and cultural "approximation": thereby being unjust to Hinduism no less than to Christianity itself and laying oneself open, not unfoundedly, to the accusation or the suspicion, on the part of sensitive Hindus, of "spiritual imperialism" and of insincere manoeuvres.

2) The task is not so much of taking up "new" things from the Hindu heritage, as of following oneself to be goaded by the confrontation into deepening in a very special and peculiar way (and in this consists, undoubtedly, India's special vocation, according to the prophetic vision of Monchanin) values that in Christianity are already given and are already present. This "rediscovery", in the Bible and in the tradition of realities already present, but which are to be emphasized with particular vigour and more distinctly developed and manifested, is a task to which the Church of India cannot renounce, it is a precious and glorious service that these Churches are called to offer to the universal Church.

3) *Of these elements of Indian spirituality which are to be rediscovered and highlighted* (not only in one's own thought or in theological discourses, but in the most concrete reality of life!), a certain number, by way of example, can be suggested:

a) the sense of the Absolute of God (but without ambiguity as to the confession of a personal God and of His infinite qualitative difference from the creation);



b) the sense or the Presence of God (but, again in such a way that such a vivid perception of presence does not obscure the powerful and clear experience of transcendence);

c) the doctrine of the trustful self-abandonment to God, and of the renunciation to the seeking of the, 'fruit of works' (provided that this is never confused with blind subjection to castal duty and provided it is a self-abandonment to a personal God and not to an impersonal cosmic law or fate);

d) the value of sacramental realities, as "loci" of encounter with God (but on condition that one frees oneself entirely of any residual mythologism, and that one avails oneself of this occasion also to counter the anti-sacramental prejudice of great part of the Upanishads);

e) the value of prayer and the first place given to the office of contemplation and praise (on condition that this never comes close to a refusal of the work of Faith, and on condition that this prayer is free from the binding imposition of a technique - the Christian has been freed from these things, and in the most authentic tradition of Christianity the techniques are never an integral part of prayer, which is left to the free action of the Holy Spirit; furthermore, on condition that it is not forgotten that the highest prayer, for the Christian, is not the solitary meditation contemplation, but the celebration of the Eucharist);

f) the veneration of the Scripture (the use that Hindus make of their scriptures and the veneration they surround them with, can and ought to stimulate us to rediscover the primary value of Sacred Scripture in our life of prayer and in our spirituality, as well as in our theology; but our Scriptures - of incomparably higher value, because they are the only ones truly inspired- are together the Old and the New Testament, in their indivisible unity);

g) the seriousness of the ascetic effort (on condition that it is not forgotten that, for a life of mortification and renunciation, the Christian bases himself on a great variety of motivations, and on new forces, and that all this he can accomplish in a different spirit, in newness of spirit).

h) in the line of ascetic effort, the reverence for poverty, the appreciation at their true value of silence and of obedience; and in the line of spiritual wisdom, the rediscovery of the meaning and of the irreplaceable function of spiritual paternity (but it must not be forgotten that the poverty of the Christian is the following of the Poor Christ and is a manner of living the mystery of His Cross; that the silence is not for mental void, but for the hearing of the Word of God; that the obedience is imitation of Christ "who has made Himself obedient even unto death"; and that spiritual paternity is a true and authentic charism, based on the unique subjection of all to the unique Word of God).

4) There is nothing to prevent, in the meantime, a study of Hindu tradition from being undertaken: on occasion also in public, with carefully and seriously commented readings of the sources.

On condition that this always happens

- a) before a public at least initially prepared
- b) with a careful discernment of the texts
- c) without false irenisms and without passing over the differences.
- d) in such a way that the entire encounter is - as befits any meeting among Christians- *really* commanded by the Work of God revealed in the Christian Scriptures.

III Only out of this double integration- an authentic cultural and spiritual restoration- can a sound liturgical reform be born: this would lead to the attainment of a greater "truth" and to more vital relevance in the celebrations of the Mysteries and of the prayer of the Church.

#### EXPLANATION

1) The sharply negative judgement expressed above with regard to modifications introduced in 1968 to the Malabar liturgy restored in 1962 and with regard to the so called "Indian liturgies", must not be understood as intending to block all study of reforms or to discourage every attempt in this direction.

Indeed, it firmly considered that also the liturgy - as the Church itself - is perennially to be reformed: it is a living reality, and it cannot be an immobile reality, but must live with the People of God to which it belongs. Remaining itself it must grow every day and conform itself to the reality of the ever new gifts that the Lord grants His people. This continual "reforming itself" and, hence of "changing itself" is a basic condition of its truth. If it is true, therefore, that the liturgy is received as something given nevertheless, no text is to be considered intangible for centuries or marked by the perennial prohibition "ne varietur"

2) But these changes

a) must not and cannot ever be a "change of identity": on the contrary, it is necessary to discover ever more deeply the spirit and the sense of one's own liturgy, and make it become ever more itself, to free it from dross which inevitably, as life goes on, attaches itself to it and reforms its beauty and simplicity.

b) must flow from an authentically spiritual basis; *not*, therefore, out of a pure intellectualistic quest. The liturgy is the work of the Spirit: only in the Holy Spirit, and by His gift, and in a movement which involves the whole Church, can it grow and become more true. Not, therefore, the brain - child of a professor or come to birth on his little office-desk;

c) must be the fruit of serious study and of mature reflection: a hurried experimentation - as others which have been made in these years - can only have as result to perturb and divide the Church: and offer only abstract and unacceptable products in an area where every superficiality and mere approximation is absolutely to be banned. In this connection, Fr. Noncent declares with perfect balance of judgement "We must *study the problems with maturity*. Have the courage to study, but not to pass to realizations until the problem has been thoroughly studied and until the ecclesiastical authority has given the green light", (in "Notitiae", 165, p. 178).



And Fr. Zeitler, whom certainly no one can suspect of being "reactionary" or of lacking in fervour with regard to "inculturation", has this severe warning. "It has sometimes been said that some of our experiments and of our liturgical innovations are not authorized. Many think that this is the worst sin that can be committed in the liturgical sphere. No. There is a sin yet graver, a sin against the Spirit. It consists in that many of these experiments are so lacking in theological depth and have so little- or none-theological spirit that they set aside the Holy Spirit". ("The Second All-India Liturgical Meeting", 1969, p. 71).

3) The measure of this seriousness - an indispensable condition for the reform, desired by all and considered necessary, but which should be achieved in the proper way - in our opinion, is the degree of effective concern, diligence and zeal, with which the Eastern Churches of India pursue the double integration referred to above.

a. a convinced return to the sources of the great Eastern Christian tradition, at all levels;

b. a rigorous and honest study of the great spiritual traditions of India.

Only by doing this, will the Eastern Churches fully rediscover themselves, in their origins and in the actuality of their involvement and their life and witness in the midst of the Indian people.

Of this greater "truth" of the Eastern Churches of India, the authentic and organic reform of their liturgy will be the most manifest and liveliest fruit.

### CONCLUSIONS TO BE DETERMINED

The Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church are asked to declare their mind on the following proposition:

a) that, from the text the use of which was permitted *ad experimentum* in 1968, return be made - at least gradually, with pastoral prudence and with adequate and appropriate catechesis - to the restored Malabar liturgy of 1962;

b) that, therefore, the use of so-called "Indian liturgies" be terminated;

c) that, measures be taken to promote that double integration which is considered to be both necessary to the life of this Church and an indispensable premise of the desired liturgical reform, and notably:

1) in an Eastern-Christian direction, through a deeper contact with the Syriac liturgical, theological and spiritual tradition;

2) in an Indian direction, by favouring serious study of Hinduism such as will.

a) contribute to a more authentic insertion in the life of the Indian people.

b) make for a better understanding of the Indian reality as well as of our own task in it;

c) serve as a powerful stimulus towards the rediscovery of important theological and spiritual categories in the Christian tradition.

# To the Malabar Hierarchs

His Eminence the Cardinal Prefect opens the proceedings  
of the Meeting August 26, 1980

Your Eminence,  
Your Grace,  
Your Lordships,

Together with my collaborators—His Grace Archbishop Mario Brini, Secretary of this Sacred Congregation; Monsignor, Mylanyk, Under-Secretary; Monsignors Rizzi, Berger, Mifsud, Mottola and Father Michelangelo Batiz, O.C.D., Rector of the Damascenum and our Consultor—, I am happy to greet you and to extend to you a most cordial welcome to this city of Rome, which is the See of the Holy Father, Peter's successor, to whom at this moment go out our filial thought and our respectful good wishes.

We are gathered together here today to review and to evaluate the state of the liturgical reform of the Syro-Malabar Rite. Time and again this has had to be deferred; but it has found now its chosen moment, as well as its collegial and fraternal setting, in the context of your visit "ad limina Apostolorum", which, itself deferred from month to month, turns out to be "liminal" in my regard too, since it finds me at the beginning — the threshold, so to say — of my tenure of office as Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

I am personally gratified to note that, as a result of this strange interplay of circumstances, my first task and my first encounter should be precisely with you, Most Reverend Hierarchs of the Syro-Malabar Church, with whom the Hierarchs of the Syro-Malankara Church have fraternally associated themselves.

Thank you, therefore, for this your Visit, for these, so deeply appreciated, first fruits you have afforded me.

And I ask myself whether this Visit does not, in a sense, put me under an obligation to return it: not simply for reasons of "reciprocity" but rather, and above all, that I might personally acquaint myself with your beloved Church, the community of the Thomas Christians, and encounter it in its home territories, where, according to a tradition that gains ever more credit among scholars, Saint Thomas the Apostle worked and planted the good seed; in those territories where, under the wise guidance of your pastoral zeal, your Church flourishes in so many institutions that



radiate the Truth and Love of Christ the Lord, thanks to the ardent concern of your priests and religious, men and women, and of many committed lay-people, active in the various Eparchies; in those territories, again, where the phenomenon of an abundance of authentic vocations to the priestly and the religious life continues and maintains itself, to the admiration of all the Churches.

I am indeed eager to see that blessed Land, and also the missionary Eparchies; and let me assure you that "Deo propitio" I shall not let go by a favourable opportunity.

Coming now to the subject before us, - I have the impression of being in the same position the Fathers of the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council found themselves in, when confronted, as we are, with the question of liturgical reform.

The "fervor novitius" which inspires me does not protect me from a certain trepidation. I am, in fact, convinced that the crisis around the liturgy is all the more serious and painful in that it derives from a vaster ensemble of theological and spiritual problems which for sometime already invests the whole Church. Further more, it seems to me that the problem of inculturation facing the Church, say, in Africa-where a true philosophy does not exist-is different from that of inculturation in India, where the Church is confronted by the various forms of Hinduism, philosophical thought so weighty that it has influenced our Western Idealists (from Schopenhauer to Hegel) and-in ancient times-perhaps Plato himself.

I would say that the Church in India finds itself in a position rather similar to that of the Early Church in the face of the various Hellenistic system: a problem or challenge that was answered by the Fathers of the Church, to the salvation of all. Allow me to quote here from the Holy Father's Letter "Patres Ecclesiae", published earlier this year (January 2, 1980):

"They (the Church Fathers) are a stable structure of the Church, and on behalf of the Church of all ages they fulfil a perennial function. Thus it is that every successive proclamation of the Gospel and act of magisterium, if it is to be authentic, must measure itself up with their proclamation and their magisterium; every charism and ministry must draw from the living source of their paternity; and every new stone, added to the holy edifice which every day grows and broadens, must find its place in the structures already posed by them and with these structures join and weld together".

I am, at any rate, convinced that if, with God's grace, we succeed in finding a correct line of approach and an agreed solution for a liturgy pleasing to God, consonant with Tradition and at the same time revised without damage to Christian doctrine (-in other words, enriched by elements which are "in aedificationem" and not "in destructionem" or "in dissonance"), then, having provided for a sound "lex orandi", the problem of the "lex credendi", will also have been solved at its roots. And such is my fervent wish for the beginning of these deliberations.

If I make bold to preside over this Consultation, it is also because, besides responding to the call of duty, I have other motives that induce me to be full of hope.

As Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops, I came to know "ex officio et ex animo" the three Eastern-Rite Metropolitan Archbishops of Kerala who were de iure members of that venerable body: His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Parecattil, the first Malabar Cardinal in history (cui honor, honor", Your Eminence!); His Grace Archbishop Padiyara, who next October will be celebrating his Silver Jubilee of Episcopate ("ad multos annos", Your Grace!); as well as the Syro-Malankara Archbishop, Mar Gregorios.

In the proverb "ab uno disce omnes" holds any truth, then I can well say that I already know you all, not "ab uno" but "a duobus"!

And yet I can say that I distinctly know each one of you and your respective Eparchies: and this, from reading your diligent and careful "Quinquennial Reports", in which I see reflected the imprint of your zeal, the vigour of your initiatives, as well as the unavoidable exigencies of your normal pastoral commitments and of the work of evangelization, especially in the missionary Eparchies.

To each one of you, if only with a small margin of advance, has been sent a copy of the Report on the state of the liturgical reform. It is now open for you to discuss. I would like to say, adapting the words of Holy Scripture, "trado cam disputationi vestrae" (Qoheleth 3,11).

The Sacred Congregation intends to listen carefully to your observations and to take due note of them.

I desire only to make a few points:-

1. In the first part (pages 1 to 13), which consists in a brief chronological survey have been listed only the more salient moments. Hence, it is not to be considered a complete register of events. Thus, for example, there is no mention of Cardinal de Fürstenberg's letter of May the Second, 1968, in which, writing on his own authority, he declares he shared some of the grievances expressed in a "Memorandum" sent by the Honourable Mr. Justice Joseph Vithayathil and which concerned the Sign of the Cross and the representation of the Crucifix, etc.

It was a question here of a personal stand limited to a two-year experiment and subordinated to the considered views of the Bishops (page 2, n. 10 a).

2. The second part (pages 14 to 19), containing doctrinal principles, has been considered a necessary premiss to ensure a firm basis for a sound reform: in it the concepts of "sacred" and "sacrifice" are given special relief; and is especially against the "festinatio" of the so-called "Short Masses" (page, 17, 12).

If the Holy Father is not with us personally here today, as had been hoped, he is with us certainly with his teaching, and especially by means of the Apostolic letter "Dominicae Cenae", from which we have largely drawn: a Letter which implicitly and even explicitly, if only in a secondary manner, applies - ratione rei - also to Orientals (page 16, a).

3. The third part (pages 20 to 35) is more properly technical. Various points of the "Indian Mass" and of the "Indianized Mass" (of the CMI Group



of Bangalore) are subjected to critical analysis. Some expressions have been criticized, not because they are theologically erroneous, but because they are liturgically or historically indefensible, or because derived from improper texts, or because the general context renders them dangerously ambiguous.

Thus, on page 25, the use of the term OM to invoke God is criticized because of its ambiguity.

I desire, in particular, to draw your attention to what is stated on pages 29 to 35.

I would like to repeat that "the liturgy is the work of the Spirit; only in the Holy Spirit and by His gift, and with a movement that involves the whole Church, can the Liturgy develop and become more true" (page 34, 2b).

it is hardly necessary to say that the Sacred Congregation attaches great importance to the response that the Bishops, in their wisdom and prudence, will give to the final queries.

As regards the text of the "1968 Mass", I would like to point out that, as appears in our Report on page 3, n. 11a and 11b, the Sacred Congregation permitted its use without having had the time to submit it to examination, given the urgency of the case and the time of year (mid-summer).

When, however, the experts examined the text, they were far from enthusiastic. Even some of the Bishops, I am so informed who had requested permission for its use in August 15, 1968, subsequently dissociated themselves from that text, which, in any case, had only been allowed "ad experimentum".

This has led me to conclude that the new reform should have as its basis the text of the Missal of 1962.

Before concluding, I would like to quote from a letter of my immediate predecessor, His Eminence Cardinal Philippe, to whom belongs the merit of the preparation of this meeting and to whom I desire to offer a grateful tribute together with my best wishes, - a letter dated May 22, 1979, and addressed to His Eminence Cardinal Parecattil:

"... It is certainly evidence of pastoral wisdom to have maintained and rightly appreciated devotional practices such as the daily recitation of the Rosary, Sacred Heart devotions," etc.

I would like to make my own this commendation of the devotional praxis. The letter so continues:

"Your Eminence is well aware of the abuses and arbitrary usages which, under the specious pretext of Conciliar reform, have lacerated the union of hearts and impoverished Divine Worship, to the grave detriment of the unity and sanctity of the Church".

This observation is the basis of today's Meeting.

But the letter enlarged its scope to embrace the whole range of the reform, from the Eucharistic liturgy, to the Divine Office and the Rituale, with these words which it is worth-while reaffirming here:

"Under the circumstances, therefore, I would request Your Eminence to further, with united and concerted effort, the work of producing agreed and definitive texts of the Eucharistic Liturgy, the Divine Office and the Rituale, and to forward the texts so prepared to this Sacred Congregation".

How much work awaits your pastoral solicitude!

I think it would be wise to take concrete steps, already from now, to reactivate the groups of experts and the Commissions which will, "Deo adiuvante", have to complete the preparation of the new texts on the spot.

So, I open "in nomine Domini" the discussion on the present Report, giving the word to Cardinal Parecattil and inviting all who wish to intervene to express their mind in all frankness and to keep themselves within the subject before us.

Thank you.



## Liturgical renewal in the Oriental Churches according to the spirit of Vatican Council

Pope John Paul II

*On Friday, 29 August, the Holy Father received in audience a group of Indian Bishops of the Malabar and the Malankara Rites on the occasion of the their "ad limina" visit. The group was led by Cardinal Joseph Parecattil, Archbishop of Ernakulam for the Syro-Malabars. The Holy Father delivered the following address.*

Venerable and dear Brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ,

1) I am very grateful to you for your visit today; it is indeed with great joy that I address my affectionate greeting to all of you who, together with Cardinal Joseph Parecattil, Archbishop of Ernakulam and President of the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Eastern Code of Canon Law, have come from different parts of India for this *ad limina* visit and for your collegial meeting.

2) In you I sense the presence here of the whole Syro-Malabar Church, this Eastern and authentically Indian Church which for centuries has



been a marvel of Christian witness in fidelity to its primitive faith and to its legitimate traditions. And hence my greeting goes today to your entire Church: to the priests, to the men and women Religious, to the members of Secular Institutes, to the young, to the old, to the fathers and mothers of families, to the workers, to the children and to all the faithful, especially those who are in sickness and in pain.

My greeting and good wishes go also to the faithful and Pastors of the other Churches who live alongside of you in the different parts of Kerala and in the rest of India, as well as to the brethren of the Christian communities which are not yet in full communion with us. They go likewise to all the members of the non-Christian religions.

3) In this collegial visit, I wish officially to express my gratitude for the diligent reports which you have placed at my disposal and at the disposal of my collaborators in the Apostolic See, for a greater knowledge of your Eparchies with their many clergy and religious. These Eparchies are teeming with pastoral and missionary activity; their activities are also manifested in the field of culture through colleges and schools, in the field of charitable and social assistance through hospitals and dispensaries, and wherever there is need to work for the human, social and spiritual advancement of your communities or of anyone without distinction of belief, race or rite. I have noted your commitment, full of dedication and of love for all. This is an honour and a duty for the whole Catholic Church, and this is also the task of your Church. It has always been so, and today especially this commitment shines with new lustre. I am happy to render testimony to your zeal.

4) This perspective of openness to all people without any distinction is a challenge to my own apostolic service, which is described by *Lumen Gentium* in these words: "universo caritatis coetui praesidet, legitimas varietates tuetur et simul invigilet ut particularia, nedum unitati noceant, ei potius inserviant" (no. 13).

I have desired this encounter with you and I wish to thank you for the praiseworthy responsibility with which you have accepted the invitation of the Sacred Congregation to participate in a study meeting on the reform of the Sacred Liturgy of your own Church. This is a meeting from which it seems right to expect the happiest of results with respect to a clear liturgical discipline and a liturgical renewal according to the directives and spirit of the Second Vatican Council. You may be sure that the Successor of Peter, on every occasion, as in this fraternal encounter, has only one desire and proposal, that of being what the Council has called: "unitatis tum Episcoporum tum fidelium multitudinis perpetuum ac visibile principium et fundamentum" (*Lumen Gentium* 23).

5) What fundamentally does this encounter of ours and your collegial meeting with the competent Congregation of the Holy See look to if not to the realization of perfect communion in *vinculo pacis*? The Liturgy manifests and effects unity in an altogether special way. "Liturgical actions are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the 'sacrament of unity', namely, a holy people united and organized under their bishops. Therefore liturgical actions pertain to the whole body

of the Church; they manifest it and have effects upon it" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 26).

Besides setting forth with such vigour this general fundamental theological concept, the Council draws attention to other principles of the greatest importance: the Church desires to respect and foster in a special way "the spiritual adornments and gifts of the various races and peoples. Anything in their way of life that is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error she studies with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact. Sometimes, in fact she admits such things into the liturgy itself, as long as they harmonize with the true and authentic liturgical spirit" (ibid., 37). Moreover, *Lumen Gentium* states: "By divine providence it has come about that various churches established in diverse places by the apostles and their successors have in the course of time coalesced into several groups, organically united, which, preserving the unity of faith and the unique divine constitution of the universal Church, enjoy their own discipline, their own theological and spiritual heritage. This variety of local Churches with one common aspiration is particularly splendid evidence of the catholicity of the undivided Church" (no. 23).

But at the same time the Council wishes these Churches to be faithful to their traditions: "For it is the mind of the Catholic Church that each individual Church or rite should retain its traditions whole and entire, while adjusting its way of life to the various needs of time and place" (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, 2). This same Decree also proclaims: "All Eastern rite members should know and be convinced that they can and should always preserve their lawful liturgical rites and their established way of life, and that these should not be altered except by way of an appropriate and organic development" (ibid., 6).

To attain their aim it is necessary to have a rigorous and severe application of the conciliar directives on fidelity to the traditions of one's own rite: "Easterners themselves should honour all these things with the greatest fidelity. Besides, they should acquire an ever greater knowledge and a more exact use of them. If they have improperly fallen away from them because of circumstances of time or persons, let them take pains to return to their ancestral ways" (ibid., 6). Difficulties will not be lacking in the field of returning to the genuine sources of one's own rite. It is a question, nevertheless, of difficulties which must be faced *viribus unitis* and *Deo adiuvante*.

The liturgical renewal is hence the fundamental element for the ever fruitful life of your Church: a renewal founded on fidelity to your own genuine ecclesial traditions and open to the needs of your people, to your culture and to possible changes owing to your own organic progress. You will be usefully guided by the fundamental principles which are set out in the letter *Dominicae Cenae*, and which will assist you not to err in a matter that is so important and so delicate.

6) After these reflections on the Liturgy, I am pleased to speak about the Memorandum that you wished to make known to me through the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Churches. The content of this document, despite the brevity imposed on it by reason of circumstances, invites me to reflect on the history of your glorious Church, which in the free world is the Eastern



Church that is most numerous and flourishing, the one with the greatest number of priests, men and women religious, seminarians and laity.

How can we fail to emphasize with joy and with true satisfaction the contribution of your Church to the cause of the missions, not only in India but also elsewhere, to the promotion of priestly and religious vocations, to the activities of teaching and of charitable assistance, etc.? There is no question of underestimating the many human factors that have their own influence in these phenomena, but rather of noting how these factors are also indebted to the Christian faith of your Syro-Malabar families, who are always open to giving their children to the cause of the universal Church even beyond the boundaries of your particular Church. I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to you the Bishops, to your priests, to the religious, the members of Secular Institutes, the seminarians and the generous families, for what you have done and continue to do for the universal Church. What at one time the missionaries of Europe and America did and are still doing in *auxilium Orientalium*, you have done and are doing in *auxilium Ecclesiae Latinae*. I sincerely thank you. All of this is in perfect harmony with the spirit of the Council which wants the particular Churches to feel in their heart responsibility for the other Churches and for the universal Church.

7) After a glance at your Church, my thought turns to the *desiderata* that you have presented. The importance of what you set forth, as well as the canonical, ecclesiological, pastoral, doctrinal and practical implications thereof, explain why it is not possible on this occasion to give an immediate and complete response to your proposal.

When there is a question of matters that concern the whole Church, and the creation of supra-episcopal structures in which the interests of different Bishops and particular Churches are involved, the Holy See adopts serious and wise procedures that are sanctioned by the practice of many centuries. I wish to assure you how happy I am to see that you are endeavouring to affirm and deepen your identity as a particular Eastern Church. I am pleased to quote here the thought of my great predecessor Paul VI in his concluding discourse at the 1974 Synod of Bishops: "Eodem tamen tempore exoptamus, ut sedulo caveatur ne altior pervestigatio essentialis huius aspectus rerum, quae Ecclesiae sunt, ullo modo noceant firmitati 'communiois' cum ceteris particularibus Ecclesiis et Petri successore, cui Christus Dominus grave, perenne atque amoris plenum hoc officium commisit, ut agnos et oves pasceret (John 21:13-17), ut fratres confirmaret (Luke 22:32) ut fundamentum esset et signum unitatis Ecclesiae" (26 October 1974; AAS 66, p. 636).

With reference to some phrases of your Memorandum, I would like to recall an aspect of the collegial teaching of the Second Vatican Council: "Romanus enim Pontifex habet in Ecclesiam, vi muneris sui, Vicarii scilicet Christi et totius Ecclesiae Pastoris, plenam, supremam et universalem potestatem, quam semper libere exercere valet" (*Lumen Gentium*, 22). On the occasion of the above-mentioned Synod Paul VI added: "unum potius adest propositum, quo videlicet omnes-pro suo quisque munere suscepto fideliterque impleto-Dei voluntati respondeant, maxima impulsu dilectione" (ibid.). I wish however to assure you that everything will be done, compatibly with the good of the universal Church and with the necessary gradualness.

8) In the same order of ideas there is also the problem of the assistance to your faithful outside your Eparchies. On the one hand my unforgettable predecessor John Paul I, in his brief pontificate, had the opportunity and joy of being able to appoint Archbishop Antony Padiyara as Apostolic Visitor for the Malabar faithful living in different regions of India outside the territories of Eastern jurisdiction. The Archbishop has striven with exemplary solicitude to fulfil the task entrusted to him, and I wish to express my gratitude to him *coram vobis*.

Also involved, on the other hand, in this question are the Papal Representative in India and the Latin Ordinaries of those places where these Malabar faithful are living. I can assure you that there will be rendered accessible to these faithful all the helps which the laws of the Church foresee, particularly by the prescriptions, which you yourselves have cited, of the Decree *Christus Dominus*. It is well known how, after the Council, the Church wished to revise the Apostolic Constitution *Exul Familia*, and my predecessor Paul VI in *Pastoralis Migratorum Cura* did not omit any effort to place every spiritual help at the disposal of emigrants. The common concern of the Bishops of the emigrants' places of origin and the Bishops of their new homes requires a harmony of relationships and a spirit of fraternal collaboration. It is my most earnest desire, and my conviction, that the Episcopal Conferences, whether of India or the regional ones, will find a way to develop a just manner of providing for this need.

In his effort to help the most needy faithful, either spiritually or materially, the Malabar Bishops will find in the Holy See a sincere support and an animating force, which, in an ecclesial perspective that embraces the needs of the individual particular Churches and the common good of the whole Church, seeks to create a climate of mutual knowledge and esteem among all people, especially among the faithful of different races, nations and rites.

I would like to add yet a word about your Eparchies. I am not only thinking of your Church in terms of numbers, statistics and the outstanding activities of each of your Eparchies, but I am contemplating the rich spiritual life that exists therein.

I am thinking of your priests, so numerous and generous I am thinking of the men Religious who are members of Eastern Institutes, as well as Orders and Congregations of Latin origin, and who are docile to the call of Christ and in the vanguard of the Church's life. I am thinking of the great numbers of women Religious of contemplative and active life, whose consecrated oblation reflects that of Mary, and becomes the basis for a selfless service that mirrors the maternal care of the whole Church, especially for the little ones, for the weak, the poor and the suffering.

I am thinking of the young people, and particularly of the seminarians, each of you has a minor seminary for candidates for the priesthood, and there are two major seminaries—the Pontifical Seminary of Alwaye and the Apostolic Seminary of Kottayam—besides the Scholasticate of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate, with two theological faculties and a third one already envisioned.



In this regard it is worthwhile to call attention to the following exhortation: "The formation of future priests should be considered as one of the most important ministries in a diocese and, in some ways, the most demanding. In fact, the work of teaching unites the professor very closely to the work of Our Lord and Master, who prepared his Apostles to be witnesses of the Gospel and dispensers of the mysteries of God" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. "The Theological Formation of Future Priests", IV, 1, 3).

In conclusion, I present to your reflection a profound desire of my heart: you are here united with Peter 'communione fraternae caritatis atque studio permoti universalis missionis Apostolis traditae'. (*Christus Dominus*, 36). This is a propitious occasion for recalling the supreme theme of unity: fraternal unity among Bishops, unity between the different rites, unity between the Bishop and the priests, between the Bishop and Religious, between the Bishop, priests and laity, between the poor and the well-to-do. The unity which in these days of grace you have sought in the liturgical and pastoral fields must be the first fruit of this particular experience of harmony and collaboration.

My thoughts go to the Bishops of the other rites who work in the same territory and who must be not only brothers who coexist with you but who live alongside of you in profound ecclesial communion with you and with the whole Church. My thoughts go also to the various groups and communities of separated brethren who look with sincere admiration to your bond with the Successor of Peter.

My last word is one of hope and prayer to Mary Mother of the Church. May she protect you always and through her intercession may your Eparchies continue to have a great flowering of vocations and great holiness of life. May she enable all of us to fix our gaze constantly on her Son, Jesus Christ, the great High Priest and chief Shepherd of the Church of God.

And now a word to the Malankara Bishops, who are associated in a fraternal way with the group of Malabar Prelates.

I wish to extend a very special greeting to you since this year is the anniversary of an extraordinary event in your Church. You are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of that spiritual movement of which the late and esteemed Mar Ivanios was a pioneer, and which brought into full communion with Rome himself, other Prelates, and the communities which he founded: the Brothers of the Imitation of Christ and the Sisters of Bethany.

As a sign of my own sharing in this Golden Jubilee, I am happy to announce my decision to send as my Representative and as the bearer of my message Cardinal Wladislaw Rubin, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Churches, who will be present for the solemn celebration that are scheduled for 26-28 December next.

I assure you of my prayers, my blessing and my fraternal affection in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## To the Malabar Hierarchs

His Eminence the Cardinal Rubin concludes  
the meeting. August 30, 1980

Your Eminence,

Your Grace,

Your Lordships,

- I would like, first of all, to give thanks to God for this Encounter, for this close contact with the Bishops who have been placed by the Holy Spirit to govern and to guide the Syro-Malabar Church.

- And I am grateful to the Lord and to the Holy Father for the possibility offered me of returning your Visit and of sharing in your Christmas joys and in the Jubilee celebrations of the Syro-Malankara Church, which together with you represents the Catholic Church of Eastern Rite in India.

- offer my special thanks to those Hierarchs who have submitted, or who will later submit, their observations in writing.

- If in discussing the *manner* of effecting the "revision, renewal, adaptation" of the Liturgy, there emerged a diversity of opinions, the basic impression that has been made upon me is that "quoad substantiam" the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy intends to maintain its identity as an Eastern-Rite Church in conformity with the Conciliar Decree on the Eastern Churches, with its own and distinctive Eastern liturgy which goes up to Apostolic times, without hybridisms derived from other liturgies and without syncretisms from other religions. Besides, no one has ever contested the fact that the Church of the Thomas Christians - though, like all other Churches, a "pilgrim" community, not having here "its abiding City" - is anything but an Indian Church in every respect.

- I desire to recall the principle of "appropriate and organic development", clearly affirmed by the Conciliar Decree on the Eastern Churches as well as by the Constitution "Sacrosanctum Concilium". In every living organism there must coexist a power of assimilating new elements and a power of conservation, that is, of remaining oneself, of maintaining the identity. This fidelity must be pre-supposed; otherwise, one simply undergoes, and there is dilution and not vital assimilation. This "appropriate and organic development", therefore, implies the avoidance of *immobilism*, on the one hand, but also of *instability*, on the other. This has been expressed in the third part of our Report which has been discussed; and which, I am pleased to note, has met with general appreciation.

I believe that in reconciling these two exigencies lies the key to the solution of the problem of revision, renewal and adaptation of the Liturgy.



*Fidelity to the tradition* implies the renunciation to every purely individual initiative and, it goes without saying, the refusal of every liturgical text that has not been approved or authenticated, in either experimental or definitive fashion, by the Episcopal Conference and the Holy See.

*The dynamic character of the reform*, must be regulated according to principles enunciated in the Papal Documents and especially the "Evangelii nuntiandi" (n. 63), the "Catechesi tradendae", the "Dominicae cenae" and the "Inaestimabile donum". The basic principles of such documents, as it has many times been said, apply "ratione rei" also to the Oriental Liturgies.

Now in the intention of determining the concrete ways and the technical times of application, for the purpose of obtaining the finalization and the promulgation of the new text already in preparation, I would propose:

1- The Commission at present working at the project is to terminate the elaboration of the text within the next Christmas (1980), - this as far as the Eucharistic Liturgy is concerned.

The Commission is to conduct its proceedings, bearing in mind the texts of 1962 and 1968 and the general principles indicated by this Sacred Congregation.

2. This text is, on completion, to be presented to the examination of the Syro-Malabar Episcopal Conference, which will make the observations it considers necessary. It is suggested that, in the event of divergency of opinion, a report of majority and report of minority should be made.

The text elaborated by the Commission and the observations of the Episcopal Conference are to be sent to Rome; and I suggest that Easter Sunday be taken as a time-limit for this, so that the Sacred Congregation can examine the entire material before the Summer.

3. In the meantime, in order not to repeat the error of 1962, it will be necessary to prepare the clergy and the laity by means of an appropriate catechesis, to enable them to receive the revised text with favour, with intelligence and with real profit and so eliminate without difficulty the use of the not approved texts.

I renew the expression of my gratitude to His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Parecattil, to His Grace the Archbishop of Changanacherry with their respective Suffragan Bishops, as well as Their Lordships the Bishops of the missionary Eparchies.

I have heard, together with my collaborators, and followed, with much interest and attention the discussion which you have conducted with all frankness and seriousness and vivacity, in a brotherly atmosphere emerged from our meeting is in consonance with the directives the Holy Father has graciously imparted in his remarkable Allocution of yesterday, so full of esteem and affection.

I am certain that you Most Reverend Hierarchs of the Oriental Catholic Church in India, will take to heart the Sovereign guiding lines of His Holiness. Yesterday's Allocution remains a basic Document for me too, a sure guide; indeed a precious 'vadamecum' in the carrying out of my mission, only just inaugurated, as Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

As I have already said at the beginning, my forthcoming visit will provide me with the favourable occasion to come to know more closely your Holy Syro-Malabar Church, whose mystery is revealed so strikingly by its missionary drive and by its numerous projects and achievements in the spiritual, educational and social field.

Let me say with the Holy Father: may the Most Holy Virgin and Mother of God protect your Church. May Christ the Lord bless and prosper you in all your undertakings.

Once again, my thanks to you all and my most cordial good wishes for your persons and for your Eparchies.

In all truth I can say "Nemaste": not "Goodbye" but an "Au revoir"!

Rome, August 30, 1980.



**SACRA CONGREGATIO**  
**PRO ECCLESIIIS ORIENTALIBUS**

00193 Roma, March 1 1983  
Via della Conciliazione, 34

Prot N. 955/65

Your Lordship,

I am pleased to communicate, for your convenience and study, a copy of the *Observations* (Encl. 2) of this Sacred Congregation on the draft-text of the ORDER OF THE HOLY MASS (QURBANA) OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH, presented for approval by the Holy See by His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Parecattil on behalf of the syro-Malabar Bishop's Conference by letter dated October 3, 1981.

I am also communicating a copy of our covering letter (Encl. 1), dated March 1 last and addressed to His Eminence Card. Parecattil, in which Your Grace will find explained the procedure and principles followed by this Sacred Congregation in the examination of the draft-text submitted, together with detailed recommendations and directives for the redaction of a suitable and definitive text of the Holy Qurbana.



I would ask Your Grace to take careful cognizance of the material herewith communicated and to ensure that the revision be conducted in the spirit of, and in accordance with, our observations and with the least possible delay.

Renewing the expression of my appreciation of your generous and enlightened concern in so vital a matter, and with sentiments of high esteem and personal good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(Sd/-)

Wladyslaw Card. Rubin

Prefect



Encl. 1.

**SACRA CONGREGATIO  
PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS**

00193 Rome, March, 1, 1983  
Via della Conciliazione, 34

PROT N. 955/65

Your Eminence,

By letter dated October 3, 1981, in your capacity as President of the Syro-Malabar Bishops Conference, you forwarded to this Sacred Congregation the text of the ORDER OF THE HOLY MASS (QURBANA) OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH, prepared by the Central Liturgical Committee and finalized by the Episcopal Conference at its sessions on June 1-2, 1981.

Thereupon, the Sacred Congregation set up a Special Commission, composed of highly qualified experts, and charged it with the task of examining the text in question, which had been submitted for approval by the Holy See, in accordance with the established norms.

This Special Commission held its first meeting in December and continued its work without slackening up to May 1982, when it presented the results of its study to the Sacred Congregation, which took careful note of the observations of the experts and subsequently proceeded to a fresh examination.

In examining and revising the text, the Sacred Congregation was guided by those well-known criteria which it has always followed in similar circumstances and which are in conformity with the Decrees of the Second Vatican Council: "In faithful obedience to tradition, the Sacred Council declares that Holy Mother Church holds all lawfully recognized rites to be of equal right and dignity; and wishes that they be preserved and fostered in every way. The Council also desires that, where necessary, these rites be carefully revised in the light of sound tradition and be given new vigour to meet the circumstances and needs of today" (Const. on the Sacred Liturgy, N, 4).

It was precisely out of respect for the rich liturgical patrimony, the ancient tradition and individuality of the Syro-Malabar Church, fully inserted and spontaneously growing since apostolic times on Indian soil, out of respect also for the historical experience of your forefathers and for the special role and apostolic responsibilities incumbent upon your Church today (cf. Decree on the Eastern Churches, nn. 3 and 24), that this Sacred Congregation has been anxious that the Special Commission carry out its work with the requisite scientific rigour and with care for contemporary pastoral exigencies, so that thereby it may be in a position to express, with all the authority that belongs to it, its evaluation of the draft-text submitted.

The attached documentation, which I have the honour to bring to Your Eminence's attention, is the fruit of accurate and detailed study, completed at the beginning of this year; and it represents the mind and considered judgement of the Sacred Congregation in regard to the ORDER OF THE HOLY (QURBANA) OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH 1981, submitted for approval by the Holy See by the Syro-Malabar Bishops' Conference.

The Sacred Congregation has seen fit to give *a detailed response* to the legitimate expectation of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy and Community, and this, as a sign of appreciation of the work that has gone into the preparation of the draft-text, and to render correction and improvement feasible and easy. To facilitate and hasten communication of our appraisal of the draft-text, a copy of the attached documentation, *containing exact directives*, together with a copy of the present letter, is being sent to each of the Most Reverend Members of the Episcopal Conference. In this way, also, the Central Liturgical Committee can at once take cognizance of the dossier and promptly proceed, in its turn, to the integration, with all due precision and completeness, of our observations into a definitive text, of which it is desired that a copy in Malayalam be sent, together its English version, to this Sacred Congregation by September 15, 1983. It is necessary to impose this *time-limit in order to bring to an end a period of uncertainty and arbitrary experimentation that has had deleterious effects on Church life and catechesis*.

Particularly grateful for the generous and enlightened collaboration that the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy will bring to this final stage of an already long road towards the creative, organic restoration of the Syro-Malabar Liturgy, and with my fervent good wishes for the full success of the task undertaken for the greater good of the venerable and ever young Syro-Malabar Community of the St. Thomas Christians, I am

Your Eminence's devotedly in Christ,

(Sd)

Wladyslaw Card. Rubin

Prefect

(Sd)

Miroslav S. Marusyn

Secretary



SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS

Prot. N. 955/65

Observations on :  
“The Order of the Holy Mass  
of the Syro-Malabar Church 1981”

A. Remarks on the General Directions (pp. 1-2):

1. The “General Directions” are not acceptable in their present form. They are based on insufficient principles as outlined in the letter of Cardinal Parecattil, October 3, 1981. They are insufficient for several reasons, among which :

- a) They are too vague and broad to provide an adequate methodology for a matter so serious as liturgical change.
- b) Thus, the door was left open to substantial changes in the basic structure of the rites; and to innovations that are in no way “*indianizations*” but rather “*latinizations*”, including superficial modern Westernizations based on some of the worst aspects of current Western liturgical practice.
- c) There is no evidence that the method of opinion-taking was carried out with the rigid scientific controls required.
- d) The results of the voting in the commission shows a rigid pattern of two opposed blocks, at least on most essential issues. Hence, the text represents not a consensus, but the victory of one party. This can hardly be a firm basis for changing age-old traditions that are the heritage of all. Furthermore, it is clear that the minority in the commission consisted of those desirous of preserving the integrity of the Eastern tradition, which is in accord with the constantly repeated instructions of the Holy See.
- e) Numerous essential issues are left vague or not mentioned at all: liturgical art, the liturgical disposition of the church building, liturgical chant, clear and precise rubrics for the concrete deroulement of the rite, vestments. All liturgical change is a total process, not just a question of *texts*.
- f) In general, there is a “*reductionist*” tendency to limit and reduce and Westernize as much as possible, with little awareness of the

nature of ritual activity as understood from the view – point of cultural anthropology – that is, one sees hardly any awareness of what an extremely delicate thing it is to touch in any way the established ritual patterns of a tradition.

- g) In this reductionism one can perceive a certain hostility to elements which are at the basis of the spirit of this rite – as if the Semitic, Chaldean elements in use in India for so many centuries were “foreign” – although, ironically, the same hesitation is not observed when it comes to introducing novelties invented in the West, less than 20 years ago.

2. Hence, these directions are judged to show little truly critical, scientific, theological and pastoral sense of the tradition as should have resulted from an acquaintance with modern liturgical, biblical, pastoral, and anthropological studies.

3. In particular, it has been found necessary to reject or modify all the “General Directions” except for nn. 8, (but without the silent meditation or an exact time limit for the homily), 13, 17, 18.

4. Regarding n. 14: if Bethgazas are not available, then let them be provided immediately. Since they were specified in the norms approved of in 1955, one may legitimately ask how it is possible that over 25 years after the promulgation of these norms by the Holy See there can still be Malabar churches without Bethgazas.

5. Regarding n. 45: if what is meant here is an “offertory procession” of the faithful, it is inadmissible. It is a latinization totally foreign to the whole Christian East. More is said about this below.

6. Other specific points are commented on in their proper place.

#### **B. The Text: “General Observations: (Qurbana)”:**

1. The presentation of the text takes little account of the Syriac Taksa de-Qudese (1960) or of the approved Latin text (1955) – which remains the official text and rubrics approved by Pope Pius XII (1959).

2. The English is in numerous instances not a translation but a re-writing of the approved text. Specific instances are noted below.

3. The text is based on a “low mass” celebrated by one priest, whereas universal, age-old Eastern practice has always been that the approved official text of the liturgy be the solemn form. Other liturgies are lesser services based on the solemn form; the solemn form is not a sung version of the low mass. A liturgy celebrated by one priest with server, with no provision made for the service of the deacon, for the chants, etc., provides no adequate basis for planning or for evaluating the reform of an Eastern eucharistic service.

4. Latin terminology is given preference throughout, contrary to both tradition and good sense (e.g. mass, acolyte, epistle, canon).

5. Rubrics are obscure or non-existent in spite of the explicit rubrical instructions of the 1955 *Ordo celebrationis*. Let explicit rubrics based on this document be restored.

6. No mention is made of the other 2 anaphoras.

7. Characteristic elements of the Syro-Malabar tradition are systematically suppressed (the "Oremus. Pax nobiscum", the traditional anaphoral structure, the antiphonal form of the onyatha, the traditional Our Father, etc.).

8. Numerous latinizations are introduced, in spite of the constant efforts of the Holy See to restore this rite, and its constant explicit forbidding of latinization. For example: mass versus populum, silent pauses, improvised prayers, "themes", the restructuring of the preanaphora rites according to Latin models,

9. The address of the prayers has on occasion been altered: this is to be kept as it is.

### C. The Text: Particular Observations:

NOTE: Roman numerals: I, II, III; and numbers in parentheses; (1) (2) correspond to those in THE ORDER OF THE HOLY MASS, pp. 3-32; the comments of the S. Congregation are numbered: a) b) c) etc.

TITLE: Each tradition has its own liturgical nomenclature that must be respected. "Holy Mass" is a Latin term that is improperly applied to the Malabar "Qurbana".

#### (1-13) I. PREPARATORY SERVICE:

- (1) a) By "vestments" is to be understood only those of the approved reformed rite (Latin text pp. 7, 90 no. 79).
- b) The priest stands "in medio sanctuarii" facing East (*not* towards the congregation). He does not stand at the altar nor at a table in front of it (as in "General Directions" no. 2). He ascends to the altar later, at the offering of incense, as is clearly specified in the approved rubrics (Latin text).
- c) The "intention" or "theme" is not announced at the beginning ("General Instructions" n°4). This contemporary Western fad has no basis either in Indian culture or in a proper understanding of the liturgy in any tradition. *All* liturgy has but one theme, Jesus Christ dead and risen for our salvation; and the intentions of every Eucharist, including the particular intentions of the local community, are expressed in the liturgical texts themselves at the proper time. The proper time is not the beginning of the service, when our thoughts should first turn to the glorification of God (hence the opening "Glory to God...") and not to our own needs. Indeed, this proposal is an example of the inadequate Liturgical understanding manifested by the proposed text: it proposes to *suppress* the diptychs, one of the most *ancient and traditional Eastern expressions of such intentions*, and to *add* a *recent Western innovation* at a place in the liturgy where it certainly does not belong.
- d) There should not be a sign of the cross. At this point it is a latinization.
- e) "Mandatum vestrum, Mandatum Christi" is to be retained, together with the rubric specifying that it is to be chanted.



- (3) a) The text of the Our Father should follow the approved text.
  - b) The traditional solemn form of the Our Father, with *Gloria...A saeculo*, as in the approved text, is to be retained even on ordinary days, at every liturgy.
  - c) Let the rubric specify that all this be done aloud.
  - (4-5) a) Let the rubric specify that the prayer be chanted.
  - b) The translation is too great a departure from the original. Both prayers (4-5) should begin in the same way: Lord our God, strengthen..." In prayer (5), "mysteries" does not mean "sacrifice".
  - (6) The translation destroys the sense of the original. "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" is not principally the *addressee*, but the *name*. It should, be read something like: "To the glorious name of ... Trinity, Father Son and Holy Spirit, be always..."
  - (7) a) Prayers composed for this purpose are to be submitted to the Holy See for approval.
  - b) Spontaneous prayers are not to be admitted. This Western experiment has opened the door to mediocrity and banality. Very few people have the talent for spontaneous public prayer, and one person's "spontaneous" prayers always sound the same. Furthermore, in public, ritual worship (as distinct from private prayer) there is little room for spontaneity of composition and form. Indeed, such "spontaneity" is actually not that of the people of God, but of individual celebrants, who often impose their particular ideas and piety on a captive audience. Spontaneity in liturgy is found in the movements of hearts as they respond to grace, not in the liberty of individual priests to impose their personal piety on the common prayer of all.
  - (8) If retained, the traditional responsorial form, with Qanona, is obligatory, and the rubric is to specify this unambiguously (Latin text pp. 8-9, 71). For the choice of psalms cf. *Supplementum Mysteriorum*.
- At this point the Onitha d-qanke for Raza is to be restored to the text and used as prescribed in the rubrics for Raza (Latin text, pp. 10, 85).
- 9-11) a) Let the rubric specify that the prayer be said quietly. It is sometimes said that all liturgical prayers should be said aloud so that everyone can hear them. This is a false principle both historically and liturgically. Some prayers are specifically designed to be said during singing or processions or other activities of the people, or are apologies *pro clero*. Just as the clergy do not have to sing everything the people chant, so too the people do not have to hear all the prayers. Indeed, to recite all prayers aloud interrupts the proper flow of the liturgical structure.
  - b) All three translations are banal abbreviations that destroy the beauty, rhythm and force of the original. They must be re-done.
  - 12) a) The rubric concerning the veil and incense (Latin text p. 11) is to be restored.

- b) The Lakhu Mara is to be sung by the congregation and by the cantors, alternating, as indicated in the Latin text, p. 11.
  - c) The alternation, psalm verses and *Gloria Patri* are to be retained without exception. They are part of the essential structure of such antiphons, which are not just "songs" but complex liturgical units with their own integrity.
  - d) The first translation of the Lakhu Mara is to be rejected. It shifts the emphasis of the text from the *giver* (Christ) to the created *gift* (resurrection, salvation). The text does not say Christ gives resurrection, but that he is the *raiser*.
  - e) The second text preserves better the flavor of the original – but the verb should not be future ("you will raise") but present ("you raise").
- (13) a) Restore "*Oremus. Pax nobiscum*". The *oremus* that precedes prayers, in some form or other, in all rites, is a basic element of the liturgical unit.
- b) Let the rubric state that the prayer is to be chanted (Latin text p. 71 n° 6).
  - c) The translation is inaccurate and destroys the true force and stress of the prayer.
  - d) *Under no circumstances whatever* may other prayers be substituted here. The Lakhu Mara Prayer (when understood and translated correctly) is one of the most famous, ancient, and beautiful liturgical prayers in the whole of Christendom, renowned among liturgical scholars for its pure, disinterested doxological spirit, asking only to be able to glorify God, without any petition for our needs.

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

- (14) a) The Trisagion is repeated thrice.
- b) The translation is wrong. The Trisagion is at the same time triumphant exclamation, and an invocation.
  - c) The alternative translation is to be rejected.
  - d) The Trisagion is sung in a manner similar to Lakhu Mara, cf. Latin text p. 12.
- (15) The text is more an adaptation than a faithful translation.
- (16-17) a) Let the rubrics and readings for the Old Testament lessons (Latin p. 12-13) be restored for Raza, and, when possible, for Sundays and feast days.
- b) On other days, the New Testament reading (Apostle) must be maintained, followed always by the Gospel.
  - c) Let the appropriate texts, in proper form, be restored following the respective readings, cf. *Supplementum Mysteriorum*.
  - d) Here too let explicit rubrics, faithful to the *Ordo celebrationis* of 1955, be inserted to explain the concrete déroulement of the rite.

- e) Readings are read by *readers*; there is no order of "acolyte" in the Malabar tradition, and it has been suppressed even in the Latin rite.
  - f) Let the alternative prayer (Latin p. 13) be restored. The principles of the reform state that "alternate prayers can be introduced". What, then, could be the reason for suppressing those that already exist?
- (18) If there is an Old Testament reading it is followed by the *surraya* (Latin p. 13), not by one fixed psalm. Here again, an already existing variability has been suppressed.
- (19) Let the full text before the apostle (Latin p. 14) be restored.
- (20) a) The alleluia, traditional before the Gospel in the whole of Christendom, may under no circumstances be replaced by a "hymn".
- b) Let the alleluia be sung always.
- c) The variable verses (*zummarā*) are to be preserved.
- d) Restore the incense prayer and rubrics for the incensation (Latin pp. 14-15).
- (21) a) Restore the two prayers, with a decent translation, as in Latin p. 14.
- b) Restore *Pax nobiscum* and response before the Gospel (Latin p. 15).
- (22) Let the silent prayer before the Gospel be restored to the text and made at least optional (Latin text p. 15).
- (23) a) In universal Christian tradition it is the Gospel Lectionary, not the "Bible", which is read and to which reverence is given at this point as THE image of Christ among us in the Liturgy of the Word. Let the proper terminology be used here as elsewhere.
- b) The place of honor for this book is the *altar*, and nowhere else, in the Christian East. Let this be specified in the rubrics.
- c) Rubrics should not specify exact time limits for preaching.
- d) Silent periods of reflection cannot be allowed to interrupt the liturgy: they have no place in Eastern usage.
- (24) a) Let the proper title (*kározutha*) be restored.
- b) The petitions are intoned by the *deacon*.
- c) The *kározutha* may not be replaced by other formulæ. But other petitions for special occasions, formulated in the *kározutha* style, may be added following the initial fixed petitions, which express the permanent, general intentions of the whole Church and are set and irreplaceable.
- d) The universal common response in the Christian East in some form of the *kyrie eleison*. Let it be restored.
- e) "Ministers" is the traditional word even in English – hence, not "co-workers", but better (in English) "co-ministers", a term embracing priests, deacons and lesser clergy.
- f) Prayer for "our priests" has already been made in the preceding petition



- g) The final "Salva nos", universal conclusion to this litany in the East, should be restored to its proper Christological form.
  - h) Karozutha II (Latin p. 17) may not be omitted. It is the "Angel of peace" litany, of great antiquity, common to most Eastern traditions, and an essential part of the structure of the Syro-Malabar preces after readings.
  - i) If other, particular intentions are added to suit special necessities, these are to be submitted to the priest - before the liturgy and are to be formulated in conformity with the pattern of the Karozutha petitions. Spontaneous petitions from the congregation are to be avoided. (Privately composed litanies, generally unsatisfactory in both theology and expression, are one of the least successful aspects of the Western reform. There is no need to imitate the failures of others.)
- 25) a) These prayers are NOT ad libitum.
- b) The translation, especially of prayer 1, is poor.
  - c) The dismissal of the catechumens, because of its theological significance, ought to be retained, with a rubric specifying its use if there are catechumens present at the Liturgy. The catechuminate is being restored in many places. When there are no catechumens present, or if it is not advisable to use a formula of dismissal, an alternative formula, in positive key, could be used to mark the liturgical moment, e. g. :

*Deacon (or, in absence of deacon, Priest) :*

Let those, who have been baptized and sealed with the seal of life, now stay with devout attention, in order to participate in the holy mysteries.

## THE PREANAPHORAL RITES

### General Comments :

1. The title OFFERTORY SERVICE is incorrect and must be suppressed. Such a view of the preanaphora is usually based on unfortunate aspects of pre-Vatican II liturgical thinking, that saw a double offering in the Eucharist. The term is no longer used even in the Roman books, which now speak of the preparation of the gifts and altar. Furthermore, in the Eastern traditions it is the *accessus ad altare* or spiritual preparation for the anaphora comprising the *lavabo*, approach to the altar, prayers for worthiness to offer, *Orate fratres* dialogue, Creed, Kiss of peace, etc., that characterizes the Eastern preanaphoral rites and has the predominant role, *not* the preparation, transfer and deposition of the gifts.

2. The omission of rubrics conceals the real, intention of the proposed reform. Explicit, unambiguous rubrics are to be restored and submitted for approval; rubrics that state exactly who does what, when, where, and how, as in the approved Latin *Ordo celebrationis*.

### In particular :

- a) Deacon's parts are to be assigned to the deacon not to an "acolyte"-an order that never existed in the East, and no longer exists even in the West.

- b) The rubric for the prostration rite at Raza is to be restored (Latin text p. 19).
- c) Bread and wine are prepared on the Bethgaza, never, under any circumstances, on the altar. Where there are no Bethgazes *let them be provided without further delay*. Experts consulted are surprised to learn that today, over 25 years after the publication of the rubrics and instructions concerning the liturgical disposition of the church in the reformed *Liturgia Siro-Malabaresi* (Rome 1955) (Latin text, pp. 89-90, nn. 73-77), there can still be found Malabar-Rite churches without Bethgazes. At liturgies celebrated in churches of other rites, the gifts may be prepared on credences suitably located, but never on the altar itself. To do so is to destroy the traditional rite of the transfer and deposition of the gifts, and its accompanying symbolism, that dates from the time of the earliest Syrian Fathers.

3. A propos of "General instructions" n°. 15 ("It is good if the bread and wine are brought to the altar in procession") no Eastern tradition has ever known an "offertory procession" of the faithful. If that is what is meant here, this is a latinization as well as an anachronism. (Even Western liturgists have come to see that the excessive solemnization of the preparation and transfer of gifts was based, in part, on a pseudo-theology according to which the "offertory" is the laity's liturgy, and the "eucharistic offering" is the priest's. As everyone knows today, the whole Church offers the total service, each according to his or her place and order.)

In the whole history of the entire Christian East, the gifts have always been transferred to the altar by the deacons and, in some areas, with the help of the presbyters, but *never* by the laity. This tradition is to be maintained without change. It is permitted to solemnize the transfer of gifts, accompanying it with candles, incense, etc. But it should be remembered that the *accessus ad altare*, not the rites surrounding the gifts, are the fundamental part of the Eastern preanaphoral rites.

#### Text :

(26 ff) Both 'orders' A and B are to be rejected for the following reasons:

- a) Both orders are blatant latinizations: For instance: – in both orders, the preparation of the gifts is delayed until just before the *Orate fratres* dialogue as in the Roman Mass.
  - Order A moves the Creed to where it is found in the Roman Mass, but *in no Eastern tradition*.
  - Both orders place the *accessus ad altare* rites *before* the chant (Onitha d-raze) that in all Eastern traditions introduces the whole preanaphora.
- b) Both orders destroy the basic structure of the preanaphoral rites traditional in most of the Christian East. For instance:
  - In Eastern usage the preanaphora has two parts, *in the following order*: (1) The *material* preparation, comprising the preparation (sometimes done before the liturgy), transfer, deposition, covering and incensing of the gifts. This was done by the deacons and concelebrating presbyters, without the intervention of the main celebrant. (2) The *spiritual* preparation, especially of the ministers, by means of the *lavabo*; *accessus*

*ad altare* procession and prayers for worthiness to stand before the altar and offer; the *Orate fratres* dialogue; etc.

- These Eastern preanaphoral rites always open with the Antiphon and conclude with the kiss of peace. Other elements such as the *lavabo*, diptychs, etc. are more mobile, but the general norm is universally valid: the *accessus* rites follow the preparation of the gifts, and come just before the anaphora, for which they are the immediate preparation. To shift them up to before the preparation of the gifts destroys the whole order and movement of the Eastern preanaphora, and cannot be tolerated. The following outline will illustrate this clearly:

## OUTLINE OF THE PREANAPHORAL RITES OF THE MALABAR LITURGY

### Approved rite

(Latin text pp. 16-25)

### Proposed Rite (nn. 26ff)

#### I. MATERIAL PREPARATION

1. Preparation of gifts  
(during Karozutha II)

-

Credo (A)  
Entrance into sanctuary  
Diaconal proclamation  
Accessus and altare  
Preparation of gifts  
Lavabo

2. (Prostration in Raza)

3. Onitha d-raze

Onitha (can be replaced)  
(Credo B)

4. Lavabo

5. Transfer, deposition,  
covering of gifts

Transfer etc. (unless gifts are prepared  
at altar); covering optional

#### II. SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

6. Entrance into sanctuary

7. Creed

8. Diaconal proclamation

9. Accessus ad altare

10. Orate fratres

Orate fratres

11. G'hanta

G'hanta

12. Kiss of peace

Kiss of peace

13. Diptychs

-

14. Karozutha
15. Uncovering of gifts

Abbreviated karozutha  
(optional)

16. Incensation of gifts

Incensation of gifts



From this outline it is clear the proposed text destroys the integrity of both the *accessus* and preparation of gifts, intermingling them and shifting them in a way that has no basis in the tradition of any existing rite.

- c) However, it is recognized that the rites in their traditional order do present a problem when the liturgy is celebrated by one priest without the aid of deacons or concelebrating priests. The traditional rite presupposed that the preparation, transfer, and deposition of gifts be done by deacons and concelebrants, while the principal celebrant remained on the bema, entering the sanctuary only after the deposition of the gifts — i.e. at the moment of the actual rite of entrance into the sanctuary (Latin text, p. 21).

But when the liturgy is celebrated by one priest alone, he must:

- enter the sanctuary at Karozutha II to prepare the gifts (Latin pp. 16-17);
  - return for the prayers that conclude the intercession (Latin pp. 18-19);
  - enter again for the transfer of gifts (Latin p. 20);
  - return to the sanctuary entrance to perform the rite of entrance into the sanctuary — which he has already entered twice (Latin p. 21).
- d) In liturgies with concelebrating deacons and presbyters this problem does not exist and the traditional rite, as in the Latin text may be maintained, with the preparation and transfer of gifts performed without the intervention of the main celebrant, who will enter the sanctuary only at the *Ingressus in sanctuarium* (Latin p. 21).
- e) However, in celebrations by one priest only, the preparation of gifts can be done before the Liturgy begins, as was traditional in East Syrian usage; or it can be delayed and placed just before the transfer and deposition of gifts. Thus after the *Lavabo* the celebrant will enter the sanctuary, perform the preparation, transfer and deposition of the gifts *quietly* during the chant of the Onitha. Then he will return to the sanctuary entrance for the *accessus* rites, as in the following outline:

	Onitha d-raze
in a low voice,	Lavabo
while the Onitha	<u>Preparation of gifts</u>
is being sung	<u>(or before liturgy)</u>
	Transfer, deposition, covering,
	incensation of gifts
	Ingressus in sanctuarium
	Creed
	etc.

This simplifies the rite and removes confusion, while preserving both the integrity and traditional sequence of the Eastern preanaphora. *The only innovation is the one underlined.*

(32/42-35/44)

- a) These formulae are obligatory, not optional.
- b) In each case the alternative translations (given first) are to be rejected. On this point, here is what the examiners have to say: They (the translations) not only depart from the original text, but manifest a total incomprehension of 'the nature of Christian liturgical language, which is symbolic and often proleptic, and not ontological, pedantic literalism. Liturgical texts that use "Body and Blood" to refer to the gifts before the consecration, are not thereby advancing a theological thesis. This sort of language is common in the preanaphora and throughout the Christian East. The preservation of such expressions in the reformed rite approved by the Holy See in 1955 should have been sufficient proof of their suitability!
- c) The address of the prayers is to be kept as it is, not changed to "Christ" or "Father".

(36/45)

- a) What is said above (33/42 - 35/44), no. b is applicable here too.
- b) The Onitha is to be chanted in traditional form, with repetition of the opening phrase, psalm verse, repetition of the antiphon, doxology, etc.
- c) A' propos of "General Direction" no. 16: the Onitha d-raze is never omitted or substituted by "hymns". There is already a large anthology of texts available (Cf. *Supplementum mysteriorum...iuxta ritum Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis*, Sacra Congr. per la Chiesa Orientale Prot. No. 947/48, Rome 1960). Further texts, all in proper and traditional antiphonal form, may be prepared and submitted to the Holy See for approval.
- d) Note that (39/48) is simply the continuation of the antiphon (Onitha) and is sung together with it, without interruption, and in the same way. The deacon or minister may alternate strophes with the people, as follows:

*Priest* : Expectans...  
*People* : Corpus Christi... (or proper Antiphon)  
*Deacon* : Edent pauperes...  
*People* : Corpus Christi...  
*Deacon* : Gloria patri...  
*People* : A saeculo...  
*Deacon* : Dicat omnis... etc.

(35/44)

"May the Lord wipe away..." is said by the priest, not by the people, who at this time are singing the Onitha.

(37/46)

"Oremus. Pax nobiscum" is to be restored before (37/46).

(38/47)

The striking of the chalice with the paten may be omitted.

(39/48)

see above, Onitha (36/45) b).

(49/50)

The traditional text and location of the Creeds are obligatory at all liturgies. The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed is a fixed element before the Anaphora in all Eastern traditions except the Ethiopian. Parallels with Roman usage, based on a totally different history, have no relevance here.

(52)

- a) "Canon" is a Latin term *in no way* equivalent to what is meant by the Eastern term "Anaphora", which includes not only the eucharistic prayer (or anaphora as the word is used in contemporary liturgical scholarship), but also includes several formulae that precede it. So the word "Canon" is misused here from both an Eastern and a Western point of view.
- b) The translation is unacceptable.
- c) The rubrics to bow and say the g'hanta quietly is to be restored (Latin p. 24). It is a prayer *pro clero* and not meant to be said aloud.
- d) Rubric on how to make the sign of the cross and other gestures are to be restored if necessary (Latin p. 24; cf. pp. 90-91 nn. 80-85). The application of these norms in the restored rite approved by Rome remains obligatory.

(53)

- a) Restore the rubric to turn West. The traditional posture facing East is not to be abandoned for another Westernization, the *versus populum* position.
- b) The translation "Peace be with you also" is another occidental banality hardly suitable in the spiritual culture of the East.

After (54)

The diptychs (Latin text p. 25) are to be restored in their integrity, and chanted at least on Sundays and feast days, and in all solemn liturgies. They are one of the most hallowed liturgical signs of ecclesio-liturgical communion throughout the Christian East since the 4th century.

(55)

The diaconal admonition "Recte state" in some form or other prefaces the anaphora dialogue in every Eastern tradition except the ancient Alexandrine. It is to be preserved in its integrity, without change.

(56-58/47)

The rite and prayer of the *Ablatio veli*, a most traditional element in all rites of Syrian provenance, are to be preserved.



# THE ANAPHORA (56-58)

## General Comments:

- 1 The following principles concerning the text of the traditional anaphora are to be followed:
  - a) Repetition of the beginning and end of the G'hanta could be suppressed if not suitable in Malayalam.
  - b) The basic liturgical units of the anaphoral structure should be respected:
    - Kuššapa (silently)
    - Orate fratres (aloud)
    - G'hanta (audibly, voice slightly modulated)
    - Qanona (chanted or exclaimed)
  - c) The silent kuššapa are to be preserved in the text.

## Text:

Rather than comment on each point of the proposed anaphora, which omits too much, it was thought better to propose a structure and a test.

The following model is proposed for its *structure*. No attempt has been made to provide a literary English style suitable for public use.

## (PREFATORY DIALOGUE)

*The priest says with an audible voice :*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with, us all (*and he signs the mysteries*) now and every time and for ever and ever.

*They answer :*

Amen.

*And the priest continues with hands lifted up :*

Let your minds be up.

*They answer :*

Unto you, o God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Israel, glorious King.

*Priest :*

the Offering (Qurbana) is being presented to God, the Lord of all.

*They answer :*

It is fitting and right.

*Deacon :* Peace be with us.

## (PRAECONIUM I)

*And the priest recites quietly, and he beseeches :*

O Lord, o Lord, give us openness of face before you, that with the boldness which is of you we may accomplish this living and holy service with

our consciences clean from all impurity and evil and jealousy and deceit and bitterness and sow in us love and unity of heart with one another and with all men, by your grace and mercies forever. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

*And he kisses the altar in the middle, and with hands extended says this G'hanta :*

Worthy of praise from every mouth and of confession from every tongue, of worship and of exaltation by all creatures, is the adorable and glorious name of your glorious Trinity, o Father and Son and Holy Spirit, who created the world by your grace and its inhabitants by your mercifulness, and made great grace unto mortals.<sup>2</sup>

Your majesty, o my Lord, thousand thousands of those on high, prostrated, worship; and myriad of myriads of holy angels, host of spiritual ministers of fire and spirit, glorify your name; and with the holy Cherubim and the spiritual Seraphim they offer worship to your Lordship. *Repeat* and with the holy Cherubim...

*And he kisses the altar in the middle and, with hands lifted up, he continues with a loud voice :*

Proclaiming and ceaselessly glorifying and crying out one to another and saying :

### (SANCTUS)

*They answer :*

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Mighty; heaven and earth are full of His praises.<sup>3</sup> Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He who has come and is coming (or will come) in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

### (PRAECONIUM II)

*In this while, the priest adds the Kussapa :*

Holy are you God, You alone the true Father from whom is all fatherhood in heaven and on earth (*he kisses the altar in the middle*). Holy are You, eternal Son, through whom every thing was made (*and he kisses the right side of the altar*). Holy are you Holy Spirit, the Being through whom all things are sanctified (*and he kisses the left side of the altar*<sup>4</sup>)

1 Tr. from BRIGHTMAN. The text may be shortened because it is a prayer said by the priest alone.

2 This G'hanta in 1962 ed., as well as in the text of the Chaldeans and Nestorians, begins with the 3rd person, and in the second part it is in the 2nd person. Here it is in the 2nd person as in the 1981 text.

3 So in Syriac: *Tešbhata*.

4 The 1981 translation is also good.

Woe to me ! woe to me ! I am frightened for I am a man of unclean lips and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, and my eyes beheld the King, the mighty Lord. How awesome is this place where this day I have seen the Lord face to face, and this is none other but the house of God. And now, o Lord, let your grace be upon us, and purge our uncleanness and sanctify our lips and mingle, o my Lord, the voices of our feebleness with the hallowing of the Seraphim and the halleluiahs of the angels. Praise be to your mercies, you<sup>5</sup> who have made creatures of dust partakers with spiritual beings<sup>6</sup>.

*He kisses the altar in the middle and says ;*

Bless, my Lord; bless my Lord; bless, my Lord. My brothers, pray for me that this offering may be accomplished through my hands.

*Deacon :*

May Christ hear your prayers, may Christ receive your offering, may Christ make splendid your priesthood in the Kingdom of Heaven. May he be pleased in this sacrifice that you are offering on your behalf, on our behalf, and on behalf of all the World who hopes and expects the grace and the mercy of Christ for ever. Amen.

*Then the priest says this G'hanta quietly :*

And with these heavenly armies we thank you, o my Lord (*repeat*), we too your weak and frail and miserable servants, because you have given us great grace which cannot be repaid. For you put on our manhood to give us life through your godhead; and you have exalted our low state, raised our fall, and vivified our mortality and forgiven our trespasses and justified our sinfulness and enlightened our knowledge and condemned, o our Lord and God, our enemies, and clothed with glory the weakness of our frail nature in the overflowing mercies of your grace.

#### **Institution<sup>7</sup>**

*And he raises up his voice and says:*

We are making, O my Lord, the memorial of the Passion of your Son as he taught us. On the night He was to be betrayed, He took bread in His pure and holy Hands, lifted up his eyes to heaven towards You, His glorious Father and blessed ☩ ☩ ☩, broke and gave it to His disciples and said: 'This is my Body which is broken for you for the forgiveness of sins. Take and eat of it all of you'

*They answer: Amen.*

*And he continues :*

And likewise on the cup, he gave thanks, and blessed ☩ ☩ ☩ and gave it to them and said: This is my blood, of the new Covenant, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. Take and drink of it all of you.'

5 It is addressed to God, so 'you' is added.

6 Translation of BRIGHTMAN, p. 284.

7 Small change in 1962 institution text: 'to you, his Father', which goes better with the rest of the text (in the 2nd person).



*They answer : Amen.*

*And he says quietly :*

And when you are gathered together in my Name, do in memory of me this that I have done.<sup>8</sup>

### (ANAMNESIS)

And we also, O my Lord, your weak and frail and miserable servants who are gathered together in your name and who stand before you at this moment and have received, through the tradition, the type which is from you: we rejoice at, and we glorify, we commemorate and we celebrate<sup>9</sup> this great, fearful, holy, vivifying and divine Mystery of the passion and the death and the burial and the resurrection of our Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ. And for all this great and marvelous dispensation towards us, we will thank you and glorify you without ceasing in your church redeemed by the precious blood of your Christ with unclosed mouths and open faces (*and he kisses the altar*).

*Qanona :*

Lifting up praise and honour and confession (= thanks-giving) and worship to your living, holy and lifegiving name now (*he signs the mysteries*) and in every time and for ever and ever.

*They answer : Amen.*

### (INTERCESSION)

*Deacon : In your minds pray. Peace be with us.*

*And he says this Qulasa (eulogion) :*

Life up your eyes to the sublime heights, and look through the minds of your hearts. Pray, and consider the things being performed at this moment in which the Seraphim with fear stand in front of the throne of Christ; and all together, with a loud voice and unceasingly, sing and praise the Body which is deposited and the Blood which is mingled. And the people beseech and the priest prays and implores and asks for mercy on all the world.<sup>10</sup>

*And the priest continues this kussapa and says quietly :<sup>11</sup>*

Yes, Lord God almighty, receive this offering for the supreme Pontiff and the Head and Ruler of the Universe, Mar N. Pope of Rome, and for our holy father Mar N. Archbishop or Bishop, now ruling our people, and for all the Holy Catholic Church, and for the priests, (kings and governors), the

8 The order of the words (and the meaning, accordingly) is not right in the 1981 text.

9 Syriac text has 'and celebrating', but this leaves the sentence without a principal verb.

10 The resume of No. (64) of 1981 text would also suffice here.

11 This Kuššapa corresponds to No. (65) of 1981 text, but the letter is in disorder, so we have followed the 1982 text. The last paragraph is omitted by the 1981 text.

Public Authorities, and for the honour of all the prophets, apostles, martyrs and confessors, and for all the just and holy Fathers who were pleasing in your presence, and for all those who mourn and are in distress, for the poor and the downtrodden, for the sick and the afflicted, and for all the departed who have died in your name, and for this people that looks forward to your mercy, and for my own unworthy self.

Yes, O Our Lord, and our God, deal with your people and with my own misery according to your mercy and compassion and not according to my sins and my transgressions, that I and these may be accounted worthy of the pardon of offenses and the remission of sins through this holy Body which we are receiving in the true faith by the grace which is from you. Amen.

Bless, my Lord; bless, my Lord; bless, my Lord. My brothers, pray for me

*Deacon* : May Christ hear your prayers; may Christ receive your offering etc. (as above).

**And the priest recites this G'hanta quietly :**

You, Lord, in your abundant and unspeakable mercy (*repeat*) make a good and acceptable memorial for the Virgin Mary Mother of God, for all the just and righteous Fathers who have been well pleasing in your presence, in the commemoration of the Body and the Blood of your Christ which we offer unto you on your pure and holy altar as you have taught us. And grant us your tranquillity and peace all the days of the world that all the inhabitants of the earth may know you, that it is you who are the only true God the Father, and that you have sent our Lord Jesus Christ, your son and your Beloved. And He, our Lord and our God, came and taught us in his lifegiving Good News (=Gospel) all the purity and holiness of the prophets and the apostles, the martyrs and the confessors, the doctors and the bishops, the priests and the deacons, and of all the children of the Holy Catholic Church who have been signed (*he signs the throne from down to up and from right to left*) with the living and lifegiving seal of holy baptism.

### (EPICLESIS)

**The priest with hands lifted upon the mysteries says:**

and may, o my Lord, your holy Spirit come

*Deacon*: in silence and fear stand and pray. Peace be with us.

**And the priest continues:**

And rest upon this offering of your servants and bless it and sanctify it; that it be to us, o my Lord, for the pardon of offenses and for the remission of the sins and for the great hope of resurrection from the dead and for the new life in the kingdom of heaven with those who have been well pleasing in your presence. *Repeat*: and for the new life in the kingdom ... (*and he kisses the altar*).

*Qanona*:

And for all the helps and graces you have given by we offer you praise and honour and thanksgiving and worship now (*he signs the mysteries*) and in every time and for ever and ever.

*They answer*: Amen.

*The priest wordships the altar and says:*

O Christ, the peace of those in heaven and great hope of those on earth, establish your tranquillity and peace in the four corners of the world, and especially in the Holy Catholic Church; make peace between the Ecclesial and the Civil Authorities; make cease wars from all over the world and disperse the divided peoples who want war, that we may live in peace and tranquillity, in purity and the fear of God. Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory.<sup>12</sup>

#### THE FRACTION AND OTHER RITES COMMUNION (69-74)

(69-70) These elements should be obligatory, not optional.

#### COMMUNION SERVICE AND FINAL RITES (75-98)

##### General Observations:

Clear rubrics, based on the *Ordo celebrationis* of 1955, must be inserted. The concrete deroulment of the rite is not at all clear in the present text.

- (82) "And also with you" here (as elsewhere) is not considered a preferable substitute for "And with your spirit."
- (83) The translation "Holy bread" is to be rejected. It is not one species, but the holy Qurbana or holy mystery that is being offered to the faithful.
- (84) Let the chant of the Qanona verses be restored here in proper antiphonal form. Variant chant texts, all in proper form may be proposed for approval in order to expand the anthology of chants, if this is desired.
- (85) a) Let the formula for communion of the deacon be restored to the text (Latin p. 39).
  - b) Add "Amen" at the end, as in the approved text.
- (86) a) Restore "Oremus. Pax nobiscum."
  - b) The text should not read "lifegiving grace" but "grace of the giver of life." It is Christ, not the grace, that gives life. Here again, the emphasis has been shifted from God to His created gifts.
- (87) a) This is the antiphon for ferias, NOT a formula of the server. Let the antiphon, in proper form be restored. Variant texts may be proposed, all in proper antiphonal form.
  - b) The translation is not accurate.
  - c) The remission of sins, an essential fruit of communion, should not be suppressed from the text. Let it read "for the remission of sins and life everlasting."
  - d) Suppress the "thanksgiving in silence."
- (92) a) Restore "Oremus. Pax nobiscum" at the beginning.
  - b) At the end restore the Our Father, traditional at the beginning and end of Malabar services for centuries.
- (94) a) Restore the proper title, 'Huttama.'
  - b) Let the rubrics specify where the priest stands.
- (95) The translations distort the original meaning.

12 The resume in No. (68) could be enough. It is not part of the Anaphora proper.



SACRA CONGREGATIO  
PRO ECCLESIIIS ORIENTALIBUS  
Prot No. 955/65

00193 Roma, July 24, 1985  
Via della Conciliazione, 34

Your Lordship,

I have the honour to communicate, for your information and utility, a copy of the letter addressed to His Grace Mar Antony Padiyara, Metropolitan Archbishop of Ernakulam and President of the Syro-Malabar Bishops Conference, concerning preparation of the definitive text of the *Order of the Holy Qurbana* according to the Syro-Malabar Rite (Encl. 1), together with copy of the report entitled, "Final Judgement of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Churches concerning the Order of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana" (Encl. 2).

This S. Congregation would be grateful, if Your Lordship would take careful note of his important documentation and offer your valuable and enlightened collaboration towards the finalization of a suitable and acceptable text of the Holy Qurbana, which is eagerly awaited by all who have the good of the Syro-Malabar Church at heart.

Thanking you most warmly for your concern, and with sentiments of deep esteem and cordial good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
(Sd)

Miroslav Marusyn  
Secretary



SACRA CONGREGATIO  
PRO ECCLESIIIS ORIENTALIBUS  
Prot. No. 955/65

00193 Roma, July 24, 1985  
Via della Conciliazione, 34

His Grace the Most Reverend  
**Mar Antony Padiyara D. D.**  
Metropolitan Archbishop of Ernakulam  
President, Syro-Malabar Bishops' Conference

Your Grace,

Since the already remote, though ever significant, date of December 1, 1934, when Pope Pius XI, of venerable memory, enjoined and inaugurated the

reform of the liturgy of the Church of the Syro-Malabar Rite, the Holy See has not ceased to entertain the keenest interest in the implementation of this vitally important project.

For this purpose, besides giving continual encouragement in this sense, the Holy See has itself taken a number of initiatives directed at satisfying the exigencies of renewal and of recovery of ecclesial heritage, felt by the whole body of the Hierarchy and faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Thus, on January 20, 1962, the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches issued the Instruction "De ritu Sacrificii Eucharistici instaurati", by which was introduced the use of the new Syro-Malabar Missal in Syriac, text printed at Alwaye, on the basis of the Latin text comprising the *Ordo communis* and the three Anaphoras, previously approved by Pope Pius XII on June 26, 1957.

This text, containing the three Anaphoras, was not integrally translated into Malayalam: only the first Anaphora, namely, that of SS. Addai and Mari, was translated and published in a bilingual edition of the new Missal, printed at Alwaye and bearing the *Imprimatur* of 7 Bishops.

It was on August 15, 1968, that was authorized the use, *ad experimentum* and *ad tempus*, of a new Missal, differing notably one from the earlier of 1962 which, as above stated, had received Papal approval (1957) and had been promulgated and introduced into regular use.

This is not the place nor the moment to retrace the history—difficult and tormented—of the too long period that then followed: unfortunately, in default of adequate liturgical catechesis and doctrinal instruction and under the cover of a reasonable trial period, a situation developed which led to hesitations and doubts and opened the door to certain experiments not all conducive to the improvement of the quality of the liturgy nor, in consequence, to the spiritual good of the Syro-Malabar Community as a whole.

Thus it was, to put it briefly, that the S. Congregation found itself obliged, on August 12, 1980, to send to the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy a *REPORT ON THE STATE OF LITURGICAL REFORM IN THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH*, which finally prompted the Bishops to submit to the same S. Congregation, on October 3, 1981, the draft-text of *THE ORDER OF THE HOLY MASS OF THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH-1981* for approval by the Holy See.

Concerned as much for the successful outcome of the initial project as for the satisfaction of the reasonable aspirations of members of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, the S. Congregation proceeded to the detailed examination of the text submitted by the Bishops and on March 1, 1983, communicated its *OBSERVATIONS*, consisting of Remarks on the "General Directions", *General Observations* and *Particular Observations*.

By way of response to this comprehensive evaluation of the draft text submitted, the Syro-Malabar Bishops presented to the S. Congregation two parallel documents which, incidentally, reflected conspicuously the divergency of opinion which existed within the Bishops' Conference upon a matter at once so delicate and so vital as the liturgical life of the Church.

The first of these documents, dated August 16, 1983, was entitled: *OBSERVATIONS ON THE DIRECTIVES FROM THE HOLY SEE ON THE QURBANA TEXT*; the second (undated) was entitled *A RESPONSE TO THE OBSERVATIONS OF THE SACRED CONGREGATION FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES* and reached this Office on January 2, 1984.

After taking cognizance of both these documents, as well as of other communications received on the same subject, the S. Congregation proceeded to a re-examination of the entire question, naturally taking into due account the various views expressed by the Bishops. A first result of this activity was the report drawn up by the specially appointed Liturgical Commission and presented by this in June 1984. Then, in order to ensure the utmost objectivity and desiring to contribute to a healthy understanding and consensus, the S. Congregation did not hesitate to subject the report of the 'ad hoc' Commission to thorough and detailed and patient revision, an operation that was brought to happy conclusion in Spring 1985.

It is evident that the S. Congregation, in fulfilling its delicate task, and acting within the limits of its official competency, in no way intended, or intends, to depart from the well-established principles that have constantly guided the Holy See in the all-important matter of liturgical reform and renewal. It has always been the Church's ideal that the different Rites be preserved in their authenticity and integrity and that they be cherished, observed and honoured with the greatest fidelity. Nor has the Holy See seen fit to accord authorization to reforms of lawful liturgical rites, whether by undue reduction or amplification or by misplaced imitation of other traditions, that are not consonant with the nature and spirit of the Rite concerned and not compatible with its appropriate and organic development. The relevant texts of the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council are a confirmation and a particularly authoritative declaration of the long-standing position of the Holy See. It should be remembered in this connection that the Conciliar Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy is only in its most general principles applicable to all liturgical traditions, not in its detailed prescriptions which hold good for the Roman tradition. Appeals made to Vatican II to justify certain changes in Oriental texts and usages are in not a few cases simply renewed attempts at latinization.

The present conclusions of the S. Congregation which are herewith appended, aim, at their most essential level, at establishing the suitability or not, the legitimacy or not, [of certain adaptations, proposed by the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy or arbitrarily, indeed abusively, introduced into the 1962 text. At the same time, the S. Congregation avails itself of the occasion to remind the Syro-Malabar Bishops that the permissions and dispensations formerly granted, "in via sperimentale" have been withdrawn and are considered as being henceforth *null and void*.

The Holy See intends to do more than simply ensure the reform of the liturgy in the strictly technical sense. In keeping with the Conciliar directives,



it desires also to foster and promote the restoration and the revival of the full, spiritual and ecclesial heritage of the ancient and glorious Indian Church of the Syro-Malabar Rite, a Community distinguished by the intensity of its religious commitment, its exquisite fidelity to Catholic Unity and to the grace of its Apostolic derivation, rich in youthful energies, exemplary and enviable in its dedication to service of the Gospel.

It is, therefore, devoutly to be hoped that the Church of the St. Thomas Christians may once again find its roots, at once evangelical and truly original, Oriental and Indian, as pleaded by a spiritual Master recently deceased. Such a "return to the sources", in liturgy first of all, cannot but contribute to the development, the full flourishing and the enhancement of a Church so fully Catholic, though still seeking to express adequately its ecclesial individuality and character. And how should not one desire that the wonderful apostolic and missionary dynamism of this Church be matched by a renewal in depth, a spiritual enrichment based on a liturgical life renewed because re-discovered in its plenitude? Unfortunately, the so-called liturgical reformations envisaged "in loco" do not seem to have been prepared by such a "return to the sources" nor by a liturgical movement worthy of the name. This "return to the sources" is definitely not a "going-back", as some could think who consider "Oriental things are backward" and who have been trained in an anti-Oriental bias, who ignore the value of their ancestral Rite and Ecclesial Tradition and who fear it might be irrelevant to contemporary man of whatever milieu or an obstacle to modern progress.

In communicating the enclosed document to the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, the S. Congregation insists on the fact that there is a crying need of a reliable, acceptable and definitive text of the *Qurbana*. After these protracted and manyfaceted consultations, the preparation and publication of such a text cannot brook any delay: It must be seen to as soon as possible, care being taken to produce a Malayalam version - or any other language version - of good literary quality.

The availability of a text of the *Qurbana* will provide also a solid basis for further reforms, which are badly needed and are overdue. The final aim is to offer the People of God, clergy and faithful, of the Syro-Malabar Rite a liturgy, substantial in content, truly representative of the ecclesial tradition, and complete in all its parts; indeed, with a spirituality drawing its inspiration, from the Bible and the Liturgy. Without such a spirituality, founded on a life filled with the Eucharist and other Sacraments, there cannot be renewal in depth.

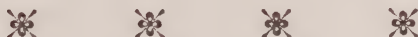
The Syro-Malabar Church owes it to the rest of the Church, and also to all Christians in this age of ecumenism, to keep its heritage and to be able to experience and display it in a living manner. One of the main obstacles to its "acceptance" by other Churches in India and abroad has been, precisely, the fact that till recently its liturgical identity was so much reduced and obfuscated. In this perspective, it is high time that this Apostolic Church again became aware of its rich liturgical tradition. Only if the authentic character of its liturgy is fully restored, will it be able to show itself under its true colours.

Your Grace will find, herewith attached, the text of the *FINAL JUDGEMENT OF THE S. CONGREGATION FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES CONCERNING THE ORDER OF THE SYRO-MALABAR QURBANA*. It is a text that complements and clarifies the *OBSERVATIONS*, already communicated to the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy on March 1, 1983. Your Grace is kindly requested to have care that the suggestions and the rectifications proposed by the S. Congregation both in the *OBSERVATIONS* sent earlier and in the present document (*FINAL JUDGEMENT...*) are duly inserted into the text of the *Order of the Holy Qurbana* and that an amended redaction of this is submitted to this Office with the least possible delay. This S. Congregation would be grateful, if Your Grace would use your good offices to elicit on the part of the Most Reverend Members of the Hierarchy faithful adhesion to the directives of the Holy See.

Thanking Your Grace for your precious collaboration, and with the sentiments of deepest esteem and cordial good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
(Sd)

Miroslav Marusyn  
Secretary



SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS

(Text sent to all the Hierarchs of the Syro-Malabar Church: Rome, 24-7-1985)

Prot. N. 955/65

## Final Judgement of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Churches Concerning the Order of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana

1. The S. Congregation, having completed its examination of the document entitled. *The Order of the Holy Mass of the Syro-Malabar Church-1981*, communicated its *Observations* to the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy on March 3, 1983.
2. The same S. Congregation subsequently engaged in a completely new study of the whole question, on the basis of:

- a) a renewed study of all the previous documentation and literature on the topic;
  - b) a careful assessment of the two replies received from the Syro-Malabar bishops, a majority report entitled *A Response to the Observations of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches (hereafter A Response)*, and a minority report by six bishops entitled *Observations on the Directives from the Holy See on the Qurbana Text, dated August 16, 1983 (hereafter Observations)*.
  - c) Account was also taken of various unsolicited documents sent to the S. Congregation or to individuals, such as that by several members of the staff of the Dharmaram Pontifical Institute dated November 24, 1983, as well as of various articles published on the topic by experts and non-experts.
  - d) Finally, the S. Congregation officially requested certain reliable experts in India to send their observations on the question, especially on the proposed *Order of the Holy Mass (1981)*, the reply of the Congregation, and the two responses from the hierarchy.
3. In its new study of this material, the intention of the S. Congregation was to seek a solution that would be acceptable to all parties by acceding as far as possible to legitimate requests of the hierarchy, while remaining conscious at all times of its serious obligation in conscience to fulfil the explicit and constantly reiterated will of the Holy See concerning the preservation and fostering of the Church's Eastern heritage. As Pope John XXIII said to Maronite Bishop Msgr. Francis Hayek, "What you have does not pertain to you alone, but to the treasure of the Catholic Church".

The S. Congregation bore in mind the supreme importance:

- a) of maintaining the integrity of the syro-Malabar Rite, since this, in itself, also forms part of the treasury of the Church's tradition; and
- b) of making allowance for slight adjustments, such as those already possible in actual, *hic et nunc*, celebration, as indeed provided for by many rubrics.

The S. Congregation intended to keep the door open for reasoned and serene proposals, and to do its best to meet requests that were well-founded and that bore upon particular points and not upon the substance of the Rite (cf. N. 16 below). *Any compromise* on this principle would not be compatible with genuine fidelity to the ecclesial tradition.

- 4. Guided by this principle, while at the same time aware of the explicit mission assigned it, the S. Congregation judged it best to proceed with its work without permitting itself to be provoked by the deliberately insulting tone of *A Response*, especially in paragraphs 1, 4-5 and 11, 13.
- 5. The S. Congregation has also noted the attacks in English and Malayalam in the public press, without seeking to enter into polemics or reply in kind to this level of "dialogue". Rather, it wishes to appeal to reason and to Christian charity. There may be disagreements, but language such as that used in *A Response* cannot be justified, and the accusations expressed in that document are simply false.



6. In contrast was the serene tone of the *Observations* sent by six other bishops and the conformity of the contents of this report with the desires frequently expressed by the Apostolic See. The S. Congregation is bound to point out that the so-called "minority" constitutes in reality the "sanior pars" of the Syro-Malabar bishops.

### Regarding Particular Points In "A Response":

(numbers in parentheses refer to the parts  
and paragraph numbers of A Response)

#### 7. (1. 1)

There was no "discrepancy of concerns". It was the concern of the Congregation for the integrity of the tradition not just in "rare celebrations" but precisely in Sunday parish worship that led to the insistence that the base-text cannot be that of a weekday low mass. This concern remains unaltered and central. (For instance, with the broad restoration of the permanent diaconate in many countries following Vatican II, one can hardly consider adequate a eucharistic liturgy text with no provision or rubrics for the deacon expressed adequately and in suitable detail). For in the East it is precisely "in those masses which are celebrated with the faithful assisting, especially on Sundays and holydays of obligation" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 49) that the full splendour of the liturgy must appear.

Hence, it is not from pastoral inexperience, but precisely from pastoral concern that the Congregation wishes "form and completeness", lest a liturgy *incomplete and without due form* contribute to the destruction of the Malabar's Church's heritage of public prayer.

As is very well specified in N. 42 below, the principle holds, and is to be firmly inculcated, that the ideal form of celebration - and, hence, the starting point for any further special consideration - is the solemn form, namely, the Raza which the bishop celebrates on Sundays, Feast-days and important occasions in his cathedral church with his priests deacons and all other members of the People of God. The so-called "Low Mass" is only a lawful reduction of this, never the other way round: in other words, it can never be the starting point. As such, "Low Mass" is a typical example of "adaptation". Reference is made here, by analogy, to SC - 41 where it speaks of the "praecipua manifestatio Ecclesiae" ("the Church's principal mode of self-manifestation") as consisting in the liturgical celebration by the bishop in his cathedral church; and to SC-42, where it speaks of the corresponding celebration in the parish church. Compromises can easily lead to further compromises, not always of the best type, to the detriment of the genuine characteristics of the East-Syrian tradition. The words of Pope John XXIII are quite pertinent and deserve to be quoted time and again.

## 8. (1. 4ff)

Concerning the issue of Vatican II's call for both restoration and updating (SC 4), the S. Congregation makes the following observations. It is in no way opposed to seeing the Malabar liturgy evolve in accord with the norms of Vatican II (SC 4, OE 6). But all liturgical development operates not in a vacuum, but within concrete historical circumstances, and the historical circumstances of the past development of the Syro-Malabar liturgy are known to all.

Hence, Vatican II also calls for restoration of the authentic tradition where it has been lost (OE 6, 12). It further states that it is for the Holy See to reform and approve liturgical books, and for bishops to regulate the liturgy in accord with these norms (SC 20-22), and nobody is allowed to proceed on his own initiative in this domain (Sacred Congr. of Rites, *Inter oecum.* Sept. 26, 1964, nn. 20ff, on the implementation of the Vatican II decree SC). Furthermore, SC 23 orders that there be no liturgical innovations "unless the good of the Church genuinely and certainly requires them, and care must be taken that any new forms adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing".

9. So there are many more texts of the Holy See than the select ones relied on by the authors of *A Response*, and with regard to the Eastern Rites the Council's first call was to restoration of the tradition. To brand such restoration a backward move is to totally misunderstand the nature of liturgical reform. Even in the West, step I in this necessarily lengthy process was a recovery of the authentic tradition of common worship during the pre-Vatican II period of the "Liturgical Movement", a process that took generations. Presently a similar process is underway in Protestant churches, many of which are now moving toward a more "traditional" liturgy with a restoration of the eucharistic anaphora in traditional form, of matins and vespers, etc.

This is what the Holy See ardently desired when the restoration of the Malabar eucharistic liturgy was undertaken 30 years ago, was approved by Pius XII on June 26, 1957, and published in Rome in Latin in 1959 (*Ordo celebrationis...*) – to which was added in 1960 the *Supplementum...* – and in Syriac in Alwaye, May 12, 1960. The reform came into force on July 3, 1962, and in the same year the Sacred Oriental Congregation in its *Decretum* of December 3, 1963, provided for some slight amendments and abbreviations while firmly rejecting other proposed modifications. This Decree retains its force.

10. It is no secret that this restored liturgy met with opposition from some of the clergy and hierarchy, and never really was given a fair chance. For a new liturgical reform to take hold a considerable period of time is needed. But within 5 years of the reform's promulgation, the Sacred Congregation was induced, in 1968, during the vacation period of that year when experts were not available, to give hasty approval to a *fait accompli*. This approval, however, was given only *ad experimentum*, to a missal that had already been printed with no previous "dialogue", to say nothing of any prior approval. Request for approval was made on August 6, 1968, and granted the following day – obviously without any adequate study of the matter.

11. The further history of this "reform" of 1958 has already been recounted in the *Report on the State of the Liturgical Reform in the Syro-Malabar Church* sent to all hierarchs on August 12, 1980, *sub secreto pontificio*. It is a story of growing concern expressed by the Holy See, and of extensions of the period of experimentation *sine praeiudicio futurae decisionis S. Sedis*. So the Congregation continually if reluctantly granted the requested extensions while trying to bring the experiment under suitable control. At the same time unapproved, aberrant liturgical texts proliferated, often of extraordinary mediocrity and with little basis in tradition. Indeed, some of them were the result of shocking irresponsibility on the part of persons with high pastoral office and responsibility in the Church.

Only after years of dialogue and communication did the Sacred Congregation feel obliged to reaffirm on June 23, 1972, that the 1962 approved text elaborated by the Sacred Congregation is to remain the normative text which any ulterior discussion or reform must take as its basis and point of departure. This measure was necessitated by the failure to control the continued use of unapproved texts in the liturgy even after this had been explicitly prohibited by the Holy See.

In short, a picture of confusion, disorder, dismay.

12. To orient, precisely, future dialogue on this matter, the Sacred Oriental Congregation set out norms that should govern liturgical reform, and once again the hierarchy was urged to submit a text that would put an end to anarchy by returning to a saner tradition based on the 1962 approved text.
13. Such a text was ultimately submitted to the Congregation (*The Order of the Holy Mass...*) and the Congregation's comments were sent, in turn to the hierarchy for their reactions.
14. In the light of this history of considerable irresponsibility in the past of some, and of the constant attempts of the Congregation to continue dialogue on the matter as shown in its constant communications and in its willingness to grant extensions to the period of experimentation in spite of continued abuses contrary to the explicit orders of the Holy See in matters liturgical in the light of all this, to accuse the Sacred Congregation of a lack of dialogue is sheer slander.
15. Furthermore, again in the light of these facts as set out in the *Report of the State of the Liturgical Reform in the Syro-Malabar Church*, one can hardly describe what was needed as "a concern to finalize a process of study, revision and adaptation" (II. 1). Rather it is a question of putting an end to anarchy. This too the Congregation desires precisely for pastoral reasons. Abundant experience, in Kerala as elsewhere, has clearly taught that liturgical confusion and constant change and disruption is pastorally disastrous.

### Particular Points

16. One must carefully distinguish substantive ritual reform, which remains the prerogative of the Holy See as indicated in the conciliar and post



conciliar documents cited above, n. 8; and the inevitable and legitimate adaptations that take place in a particular celebration, depending on the arrangement of the church building, the size of the congregation, the solemnity of the celebration, local customs, the rhythm and style of the well-trained and practiced celebrant, etc.

In the following remarks it is indicated where a certain liberty for such legitimate variety and celebrative adaptation is permissible.

The clear, irreducible distinction between the "Rite" and the "celebration" is to be maintained and rightly understood.

By "Rite" is meant that "form of celebration" which is drawn up by the Church as such and which is to be found solely in the official liturgical books ("editiones Typicae", "libri typici"). This cannot be altered, not even by the bishops themselves, still less by priests or lay-people. Strictly speaking, it is upon this alone that "liturgical adaptation" is operated, and this always by the Church, the last word, however, being reserved to the Holy See.

By "celebration" is meant that "form of celebration" which is carried out by the concrete assembly (always "hierarchical" by definition). It is upon this alone that can be operated slight "adjustments" (again, we repeat, to be distinguished from the "adaptation" of the Rite.) These are all occasions already foreseen by the rubrics themselves or called for by the concrete situation (e.g.: When a possibility of choice is admitted from among various prayers, or psalms, proposed by the rubrics). Nothing beyond this. See also N. 7 above.

17. Where the commission feels obliged to remain firm on certain points, it does so to protect the integrity of the tradition in matters that affect the substance of the rite, or because no adequate motivation - liturgical, theological, or pastoral - was demonstrated to justify the proposed change in accord with the explicit norms of SC 23 cited above in n. 8.
18. Although such a rubric cannot be incorporated into the text of the Qurbana itself, the General Instructions in the introduction may permit the intention of the liturgy to be announced at the beginning. The Western "fad" criticised presently by all knowledgeable liturgists is the custom of turning this brief announcement into a monologue - a sort of "mini-homily" - or worse, into an informal "chat" at a moment when the People of God should be focusing their attention on Him, not on the celebrant or other minister. Contrary to what is affirmed in *A Response* (II. 6), the place where the paschal mystery is applied to concrete life is in the homily. Furthermore, what was already said in the Congregation's *Observations* ... concerning the thematisation of the liturgy retains its full validity: the theme of all liturgy remains the fact that Jesus Christ died and rose for our salvation. That is always the core of our celebration, and any "theme" that narrows that focus or detracts from the wholeness and centrality of that all-encompassing mystery of Jesus' earthly economy is liturgically unsuitable. As other feasts apart from Sunday and the Easter cycle developed, the Fathers of the Church still did not lose sight of the fact that individual mysteries of Jesus' saving life are but a part of that central paschal mystery.

*Note:* The intentions are, *per se*, to be announced by the deacon; they are announced by the priest only in the absence of a deacon. (Obviously, there is no justification or reason here for the much-abused, and always superfluous, "mini-homily".)

The "intentions" must never "finalize" a particular celebration, for this is, and must remain, only the celebration of Christ the Lord in His Word, in order to worship and adore the Holy, One and Consubstantial Trinity. If reasons there be to allude to real problems that concern the community, the proper place and time to do this is, and can only be, in the homily.

This being so, the celebration cannot, and is never to be, "thematized". It is always, and by its very nature, Paschal. Hence, what is to be developed are the Biblical "themes" offered with such abundance in the Cycle of the Church's Liturgical Year: that is to say, development having as their source the *Lectionary* of God's Word and the "mobile" parts of the Church's prayer, in so far as these correspond to the Word *hic et nunc* proclaimed and celebrated; and from these sources the People of God must receive constant and regular nourishment.

19. The sign of the cross, preferably made from right to left, or from left to right where this is long-standing custom, may be tolerated *ad libitum* at the beginning of the liturgy, where it is already in general use. But it is not to be included in the approved text of the Qurbana, and in areas where it is not in general use, it is not to be introduced.

It must be noted once again: the Christian "sign of the Cross" was for over a millennium made in the same way in all the Churches of the East and of the West: from right to left. In 1962 there was simply a timely return to the *normal* usage of the non-Latinized East: the measure is in full conformity with the cogent, general directive in *OE* 2, 6 and 12. For this reason, the relevant rubric of 1962 is to be upheld.

20. *Mandatum vestrum - mandatum Christi*, is by all means to be kept for Raza. It can be adapted in translation to suit it to the genius of the local language. For example the celebrant would say something like:

*Priest:* "At your bidding let us begin our service."

*People:* "We do so following the command of Christ."

21. There is at present in the Malayalam liturgy, particularly when sung, an unwarranted insistence on the initial Our Father, without speaking of the singing of other hymns at the beginning of the Liturgy. Actually, the real, introductory hymn of the East-Syrian Eucharist is that to the Risen Christ: "Lakhu Mara ...". In the Malayalam usage of today, this hymn is simply recited by the celebrant/concelebrants.

Return to the approved text of 1962.

22. Improvised prayers are not to be permitted.

23. The psalm of the *marmilā* must be taken in full. The traditional form with Qanona, and the conclusion with *Glory be ...*, is obligatory.

24. Silent pauses, especially after the *Oremus* before prayers, may be left to the discretion of the celebrant according to the principles enunciated above in n. 16. But the prescribed silent prayers *pro clero* are to be said according to their approved text unless otherwise indicated.

Due measure must be observed here, as elsewhere: the liturgy is already prayer – one does not stop the liturgy in order to pray. All prayer, including liturgical prayer, is personal, but the liturgy is not a framework for our private prayers; it is the common prayer of the Church. Furthermore, for Hindus and Muslims, as in the patristic and monastic tradition of Christian prayer, there is no opposition whatever between recital and contemplation. Indeed, the Latin word *meditare* in Latin monastic writings meant precisely the slow and reflective ruminating on a text of Scripture that was recited. The good celebrant will know how to pace his liturgical words and actions and prayers so that it is a prayerful, meditative, unhurried experience of true prayers for the devout participants.

25. The petitions of the Karozutha may be multiplied or abbreviated – but always in proper traditional form. However, “*Salva nos...*” and the following “*Angel of Peace*” petitions (Karozutha II) must be retained.
26. Since the suppression of the dismissal of the catechumens was already allowed in the initial reply to the bishops, the polemical tone on this point in (II. 1) of *A Response* has caused no little perplexity.

But even with the omission of a dismissal, if catechumens are present at the liturgy, or if there are catechumens in the local Church – and one would expect no less in a Church that prides itself on being “missionary” – then they should be prayed for at the liturgy in Karozutha petitions composed for this purpose.

If, on account of the rite of the “dismissal of the catechumens”, problems were to arise for the catechumens (discrimination, civil, and religious persecution, etc.), it may be left to the discretion of the celebrant to omit it. However, it is to be retained in the rubrics; and suitable instruction on its meaning is to be imparted to the faithful and the catechumens themselves.

27. The preanaphoral rites following the *Karozutha* are simply to be left as in the 1962 text.

The question of the preanaphoral rites is intimately bound up with the use or not the *bema*. It is suggested that: 1) where the Eucharist is still celebrated without *bema*, the order of 1962 be kept, and 2) where Eucharist is celebrated with *bema*, the rites be indicated accordingly.

28. Since the previous *Observations* of the Congregation did not reject the proposed text of the bishops (*The Order...* nn. 37 & 45), there seems no need for further comment on this point.
29. *A Response* (II. 12) sees “a tinge of Nestorianism” in christological liturgical formulae. But such a position is untenable for one versed in the results of contemporary liturgical scholarship. Not only does the New Testament and earliest historical literature on the topic witness to early Christian



prayer and hymns addressed to Christ. The latest research has also disproved Jungmann's thesis that liturgical prayer to Christ dates only from the 4th century (*Die Stellung Christi im liturgischen Gebet*, LGF 7-8, Munster 1925 = *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer*, London 1965). W. F. Macomber, the recognised expert on the *Anaphora of the Apostles (Addai and Mari)*, holds that the address of that prayer to Christ is original, and certainly antedates Nestorianism in the opinion of knowledgeable scholars (see Macomber, "The Ancient Form of the Anaphora of the Apostles", in: N. Garsoian, et al., *East of Byzantium*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks 1982, pp. 73-83, esp. 74-75). Furthermore, A. Gerhards has shown that other pre-4th century anaphoras such as that attributed to Gregory Nazianzen, and fragments in the Acts of Thomas and John, were also addressed to Christ, and he concludes: "Contrary to the notion of Jungmann that prayer to Christ was gradually introduced into the liturgy only from the 4th century on, prayer addressed to Christ has always been one of the forms of Christian public prayer." (A. Gerhards, "Priere adressee a Dieu ou au Christ?" in *Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae*, Subsidia 29, Rome, 1983, pp. 101-114 - quotation from p. 113). One can add that the Byzantine Prayer of the Cherubic Hymn, addressed to Christ, also refers to Christ receiving the offering. Before prayers and formulae approved by the highest authority of the Church and in use for centuries by countless Catholics are impugned as tinged with heresy - a most grave accusation - one should have the facts straight.

The Christological texts of the Tradition are, therefore, to be kept as such. In other words: even where the liturgical prayer is addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ, since it stems from venerable traditions (3rd Century and later, and not only in the Eastern Christian, and East-Syrian tradition...), it is absolutely not to be changed. The accusations of "heresy" and similar allegations are simply fruit of insufficient information.

It might also be added such prayers appear to have made their appearance under the influence of passages of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

30. Regarding the formulae of in *A Response* (II. 13), return to the approved text of 1962.
31. The onitha text is to be left as in the approved text of 1962.
32. The so-called Nicene Creed is to be left in the liturgy, at its traditional place as indicated in the Congregation's *Observations*, p. 15, and it is to be recited daily at every eucharistic liturgy.
33. Regarding the blessing of the mysteries (*A Response* II. 17), those familiar with the tradition affirm that there are two forms of greeting to be distinguished in this liturgy: the simple greeting "Peace be with you" as before the pax or Gospel, and "The grace... be with us" at the beginning of the anaphora and before communion. In these latter two instances the blessing that accompanies the formulae is said to express that in the first instance the mysteries, source that brings this grace and peace to us in the liturgy of the Eucharist, are about to be sanctified; in the second instance, before communion, the blessing is a sign that this grace is about to be received by us through communion.

34. A better and smoother connection between the *gehanta* preceding the text with the words of institution and the latter be made.

A very serious problem is presented by the re-arrangement of the text of the Holy Anaphora, operated by the 1962 text. Here the so-called "Formula of the Eucharistic Institution" is followed by a section of the last *gehanta*, before the Epiclesis.

It is altogether suitable and desirable to adopt here - for greater clarity, for celebratie harmony, as well as for a more authentic theology - the apt solution of the *Missale Chaldaicum* which has the following arrangement:  
- Beginning of the third *gehanta*;

First part of the Anaphora of Mar Nestorios (the III Anaphora of the Chaldean Rite) that concludes with *Phil.* 2, 6-11;

- Continue with the "Institution narrative";

- Then follows naturally the rest of the third *gehanta*..., then the fourth *gehanta*, and then, at its proper place, the Epiclesis.

35. It is evident that "all" and "many", Biblically speaking, in both the Old and the New Testament, simply denote the same reality, as can be inferred from *Rom.* 5. Besides, account must be taken of the fact that in India the Oriental Churches, even those not of the Chaldean tradition, all without difficulty use the more authentic "for many". This expression is, therefore, to be retained in the Syro-Malabar Church, also for ecumenical reasons.
36. The initial and final repetition of prayes may be omitted, as was approved in the December 3, 1963 *Decretum*.
37. In the anaphora the kuššape may be omitted as in the bishops proposed *The Order*... n. 60, except for the intercessions n. 65, but they should be printed in smaller type. This will facilitate the recitation of the restored text aloud, which would be desirable. At sung liturgies the conclusions or Qanone should be chanted.
38. The ritual gestures and bodily postures of the celebrant are to be executed always in accordance with the relevant rubrics of the 1962 text. Such matters are *not* to be left to the whim of individual celebrants.
39. The use of Latin vestments is absolutely forbidden.
- Note: the *shawl* worn by some over *Kulina* or alb is not really a religious garb; it is indeed used by some priests in India without any reflection on the meaning of such a *shawl*.
40. On the difficult question of celebrating the entire Eucharist *versus populum*, rather than preserving the traditional distinction between the position of the priest during the Liturgy of the Word and during the anaphora, when he stood at the head of the people, facing in the same direction as the congregation he was leading in prayer, the S. Congregation has the following to say:
- a) The introduction of the mass *versus populum* was done without any approval from the Holy See.

b) The tradition in this matter remains the ideal and clearly represents the will of the Holy See in this matter.

The Eucharist celebrated *versus populum* certainly runs counter to the basic approach to worship in any Eastern tradition worth the name.

c) The celebration, therefore, is not to be *versus populum* but in conformity with the normal way of standing at the altar in the Oriental tradition.

Care must be taken:

- to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word among the people, as was done in the more ancient tradition;

- to see to it that every cathedral and parish church is eventually provided with the *bema*, constructed in the middle of the central nave and regularly put to use.

d) The *versus populum* position may be tolerated, in parishes where it has already been introduced, provisionally and for as brief a time as is reasonably possible, while keeping the fact in mind that all permissions and dispensations of whatever kind given during the experimental period are revoked.

41. In order to provide greater variety in the Eucharist, the other two traditional anaphoras are to be translated into Malayalam according to the redaction approved by Pope Pius XII on June 26, 1957, and enter into regular usage, as the Holy See intended (*Ordo Communis - Taksa d'Quddase*).

The arguments in *A Response* (1. 10) against anaphoras II - III are deemed unworthy of comment.

42. The fundamental text of the liturgy to be approved by Rome is to be the complete liturgy in its full form. In addition, it should be indicated how the liturgy is to be celebrated in its simpler form.

43. Rome in no way opposes recommendations for legitimate Indianization on which the whole hierarchy can reach agreement. Such recommendations should be carefully prepared and submitted with sufficient explanation.

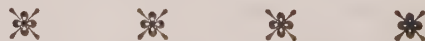
44. On all other points not mentioned in this document, the Congregation's *Observations* remain unchanged. As was stated there and elsewhere, texts of refrains and chants more suitable to Indian culture can be proposed. But Rome's desire to preserve the scriptural framework of such refrains is because these scriptural elements are basic to all Christian worship in every tradition.

It must be bluntly admitted that much of the so-called experimentation was done by priests who had neither the formation nor the outlook to make a positive contribution to liturgical development. *Nemo dat quod non habet*! This has been the case, for instance, with some of the music and songs introduced into liturgical services. A development in this direction would not be objectionable, since the Indian musical tradition, particularly in South India, is both very ancient and of the highest quality. But cheap cinema tunes will not do, with texts inspired by mere sentimentality and individualism that run counter the least liturgical sense.



### Conclusion

45. The above observations are offered in the interest of continuing the dialogue desired by the hierarchy, but with the added wish that this dialogue be carried on with civility, mutual respect, and ordinary human courtesy.
46. In formulating its judgements the S. Congregation has tried to be sincerely open and receptive to the wishes of the *whole* hierarchy, since factionalism is repugnant to the nature of the Church.
47. But the S. Congregation has also its responsibilities to the particular mission assigned it. This demands the preservation of the basic structure and meaning of the eucharistic actions, chants, rites, formulae, and of the essence of the Malabar liturgical tradition as seen in such treasures as the Lakhu Mara Hymn, the traditional anaphora, etc. But in preserving this heritage one must allow for legitimate evolution, in accordance with the principles set out above (especially NN. 8 & 16).
48. It is also the will of the Holy See that an end be put to confusion and uncontrolled experimentation by preparing a final text of the Qurbana according to the established norms. We eagerly await the presentation of this final text.
49. But that is not the end of our common task. There are many outstanding items on the Malabar hierarchy's liturgical agenda: the translation and introduction of the propers for the Eucharist, for which the initial preparatory work was done in the *Supplementum* ...; restoration of the Lectionary cycle to its integrity; restoration of the Liturgy of the Hours as parish daily prayer, and, of course, in all religious houses too where the daily office should be celebrated by rule, and in seminaries; restoration of the Liturgical Year; renewal of the liturgical disposition of the church building, etc.
50. It is the opinion of the S. Congregation that the time has come to turn the page and move on to these other questions in the ongoing liturgical renewal of the Malabar Church.



**The Decree approving the Text of the Raza and its translation.**

prot. No. 955/65

SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS

## Decretum

Jamdudum Apostolica Sedes, sollicita de Liturgia Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis ad genuinam ac primigeniam formam redigenda, iussu Summi pontificis Pii PP. XI, v. m. inde ab anno 1934, rem ad effectum deducendam sedulo curavit. Post diuturnos ac diligentissimos labores, tandem die 20 Januarii

anno 1962, probante Summo Pontifice Pio PP. XII. imm. m., inductum est novum Missale Syro-Malabarens in lingua Syriaca exaratum. Tandem die 15 Augusti 1968 Missale Syro-Malabarens in lingua malayalam translatum et ex parte innovatum, flagitantibus omnibus Episcopis, Congregation ad experimentum et ad tempus ut adhiberetur indulsit.

Ex peracto et protracto experimento non paucae difficultates et dubitationes in lucem venerunt: quapropter res novo studio ex integro submissa est. Cum anno 1980 Sacri Syro-Malabarenses Hierarchae Roman ad Limina Apostolorum convenerint Congregatio occasionem arripuit normas directorias tradendi ad textum definitivum conficiendum. Deinceps. Episcopi in patriam reversi sunt et rei liturgicae collaboraverunt, sive Consilia peritorum intereparchialia. sive Consilium Episcoporum. eorumque laborum fructus Apostolicae Sedi delati sunt anno 1981. Congregatio novum ab Episcopis adumbratum textum diligenter ac diuturno tempore consideravit et anno 1983 aliquas animadversiones ad emendatorem textum obtinendum ipsis Episcopis notas fecit. Qui quidem Episcopi, pro sua diligentia. nonnullas res Congregationi rursus considerandas detulerunt. Iterum Congregatio rem vidit et textum definitum proposuit; quem Consilium Episcoporum integrum paucissimis rebus exceptis, collegialiter recepit et Congregationi pro definitive approbatione, exeunte iam anno 1985, rursus detulit.

Quae quidem Congregatio, omnibus bene perpensis, textum adamussum demum emendatum praesenti Decreto libenter, vigore facultatum a Summo Pontifice IOANNE PAULO PP. II concessarum, rite approbavit eundemque edi iussit, prout iacet in adnexo exemplari. Qui textus vigere incipiet eo ipso die quo idem Summus Pontifex primum adhibebit dum in Regione Keralensi iter pastorale peraget ac lilium et rosam ex illa benedicta terra prognata ad omnium gaudium exultationemque albo Beatorum Caelitum sollemniter adscribet.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obfuturis.

Datum Romae, ex aedibus Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus die 19 Decembris Anno Domini 1985.

(Sd)

D. Simon Card. LOURDUSAMY

Praefectus

(Sd)

Miroslaus S. MARUSYN

Archiep. a secretis

Prot. No. 955/65

(Translation)

## Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches Decree

The Apostolic See, solicitous about the Liturgy of the Syro-Malabar Church, to bring it to the genuine and pristine form, by the Order of the Supreme Pontiff Pius XI of venerated memory, already from the year 1934, wanted to bring the matter to fruition. After long and diligent work, at last

on 20th January 1962, with the approval of the Supreme Pontiff Pius XII, of immortal memory, provided the new Syro-Malabar Missal in Syriac. Finally on 15th August 1968, the Congregation allowed the missal translated into Malayalam and partly innovated, with the approval of all the bishops, to be used for experiment and for a period of time.

From the long experiment undertaken, not a few difficulties and doubts came to light. Wherefore the thing was subjected to complete new study. When the hierarchs of the Syro-Malabar Church came to Rome in 1980 for their Ad Limina Visit, the Congregation took the occasion to give the directive norms for making the definitive text. Then the Bishops having returned to their Motherland, worked together at the liturgical question, and the Counsels both of Intereparchial Consultors as well as the Counsels of Bishops and the fruit of their work were transmitted to the Apostolic See in the year 1981. The Congregation, diligently and for a considerable time studied the text formulated by the Bishops and in the year 1983 informed the Bishops of a few animadversions to obtain the amended text. The Bishops diligently brought again certain things for the consideration of the Congregation. The Congregation studied the matter and prepared the definitive text. And then the Council of Bishops, except for a very few things received collegially and brought to the Congregation again, at the end of the year 1985 for definitive approbation.

And this Congregation, having considered everything well, rightly and willingly approved the text and ordered it to be printed as found in the attached copy by the present Decree, in virtue of the faculty granted by the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II. And this text will come into force on the very same day when the Supreme Pontiff will use it for the first time when he will undertake the pastoral journey in the Kerala Region and will inscribe/solemnly in the heavenly annals of Blessed the Lily and the Rose from that blessed land amidst the joy and exultation of all.

Nothing against this have any value.

Given in Rome, from the seat of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, on the 19th day of December of the year of the Lord 1985.

(Sd)

Simon Card. Lourdusamy

Prefect.

(Sd)

Miroslav Marusyn

Aarchbp. Secretary.

## Order for the Solemn Raza of the Syro-Malabar Church

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

1. a) Terms like "the north end" or "the south end" of the sanctuary or altar have been used on the assumption that the church is oriented. Where the church faces otherwise the right and left should be reckoned as north and south respectively.



- b) There are three divisions to the church, namely: Haykla, Qestroma and Sanctuary. Qestroma is a step above Haykla; and the Sanctuary is three steps above Qestroma. A veil separates the sanctuary from Qestroma.
  - c) The altar is set up at the east end of the sanctuary. The gospel text is to be placed at right end of the altar and the Taksa on left of the altar. Only objects used in the Qurbana are to be kept on the altar.
  - d) The chalice is prepared in the bethgaza at the south end of the sanctuary where water and wine are kept. The bread for the Qurbana is prepared at the bethgaza on the north end. A towel and water for ablutions are also to be kept there.
2. Apart from the main celebrant there **will** be three subordinate ministers as well. Of these one will be an archdeacon, the others deacons. The archdeacon must be an ordained priest. He wears the same vestments as that of the celebrant. The sacred vestments for the celebrant are kotina, zunara, urara, zandey and payna whereas the deacons put on kotina, zunara and urara. The urara is worn over the zunara. In the absence of deacons, those of lower orders may take their place. If even these latter are not available, those who have no Holy Orders also may assist the celebrant, vested in kotina and zunara.
  3. In the Raza, the archdeacon instead of the celebrant may set the offerings. He may also set them upon the altar saying the prescribed prayers.
  4. While administering Holy Communion to the faithful, only ordained deacons may be allowed to hold the chalice and the paten.
  5. After the fraction and consignation service, the sign of the cross on the forehead with the prayer "may the Lord accept your ministry..." need be made only in case the servers are deacons.
  6. The feasts of our Lord and those connected with salvation history are known as "maranaya" feasts whereas the ordinary feasts of saints have been called "dukranas" those celebrated with solemnity have been designated "Edey" or "Feasts". Other days are known as "ordinary" days.
  7. When the celebrant makes the sign of the cross on himself, he does so by placing his right palm first on to the forehead and then to the chest and last to the right and left shoulders in turn.
  8. Where the direction is for "kissing the altar" this can be done either by actually kissing the altar, or touching it with the forehead, or by placing the hands first on the altar and then bringing them to the forehead.
  9. When exchanging peace to one another, the recipient grasps with both hands the folded hands of the offerer. It can also be made by turning face to face with folded hands and inclining the head slightly.
  10. Where the celebrant is instructed to stretch out his hands he so holds them out that they do not reach above the head, the elbows not touching the body and the palms, opened up.

11. When songs are sung by the choir and those in the sanctuary in turn, the community sings with the choir. In the absence of a choir, the community forms into two groups and sing by turn the verses meant for the choir and the community.
- N. B. It is the function of the choir, chiefly, to assist the community in the singing for their active participation in the services. Only those songs that have been approved officially may be sung.
12. Prayers marked "G'hantha" are to be said by the celebrant with a slight inclination of the head, folded hands, and in a voice low yet audible to the community.
13. For purposes of gospel service, a separate structure, distinct from the altar, called "Bema", is required. Originally placed in the middle of the haykla, the bema is best set up, under present conditions, in the Qestroma just below the sanctuary, in front of the haykla. (The place where the celebrant stands is to be higher than the area occupied by the community). Seats for the celebrant and archdeacon are provided at the north end; those for other deacons and ministers are at the south end.
14. Oblations for the Raza may be prepared just before they are taken to the altar, or at the time of karo-zutha, or before the commencement of the Qurbana.
15. The practice of tapping the base of the chalice with the paten may be dispensed with.
16. Optional prayers are given in smaller letters. The asterisks indicate parts common to Raza and the solemn form of the Qurbana. Columns show the specific parts of Raza.



**To All The Local Ordinaries of the Syro-Malabar Church**

**CONGREGATIO PRO  
ECCLESII ORIENTALIBUS**  
prot. N. 955/65

00193 Roma, May 5, 1988  
Via della Conciliazione - 34

Your Excellency,

This Congregation, in the Decree of December 19, 1985, approved and promulgated the Raza text of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana.

Since that time a large number of observations, suggestions and petitions have poured into this office, all of which have been the object of close attentive study.

An image that clearly emerges from an examination of these numerous documents is beyond question: the vivacity of a Church that glows with

apostolic fervour, with the dedication of its pastors, and with the enthusiasm of its faithful, and the seriousness and devotion with which the Syro-Malabar Church approaches its liturgy truly and justly, seen as the foundation and sustenance of its spiritual life.

Now, however, the "bonum fidelium" requires that pastors, clergy, religious and laity show the necessary agreement, in a spirit of effective and constructive collaboration.

This Congregation wished to respect fully the right of the Hierarchs to express themselves freely. For this reason it awaited the meeting of the Episcopate held at the beginning of December 1986, so that the position of the Pastors could be delineated. The result of this meeting were, in turn, studied carefully by this Congregation, in order to leave nothing undone in meeting the just demands of the Syro-Malabar Church, with the firm conviction that this community will not fail to show—as it always has, even in the most difficult moments of its history—its absolute fidelity and perfect agreement of intent with the Holy see.

On the basis of this careful study, the Congregation prepared a draft of directives for the Solemn and Simple forms of the Eucharist. I myself during my pastoral visit to Kerala in August last year, presented this draft to the members of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy and obtained their general agreement on the substance of its contents; I also requested them to study the draft further with mature reflection, and to forward to the Congregation through the Apostolic Nunciature their respective remarks and suggestions in view of bettering the draft.

Going through their remarks and suggestions I have ascertained that there is a considerable convergence of favourable opinions on most of the directives. Only on certain points there persists a diversity of opinion.

This Congregation, having attentively reexamined those points, formulated a "via media" with the intent of putting together the spirit and the principles of liturgical reform on the one hand, and the pastoral needs on the other.

As it has been suggested and desired from many sides, the time has now come to give expression to a clear line of action to be followed. With this end in view, after considering all the circumstances, this Congregation has deemed its duty to issue the following Norms and the enclosed Directives, personally approved by the Holy Father Himself in the audience granted me on Saturday, April 30, 1988.

It must be reaffirmed that the Order for the Raza, prepared after long and difficult study, approved by the Congregation, and inaugurated by the Holy Father, remains the basis of the Syro-Malabar Eucharistic Liturgy, according to the texts, norms, and rubrics contained therein.

In the future this text can be improved and perfected, but only under the indispensable condition that this be preceded by a previous suitable period of implementation. At the end of five years, the evaluations and suggestions of the Syro-Malabar Bishop's Conference will be taken into consideration with a view to suitable improvements. The Bishops may also suggest further adaptations



to local culture and sensibilities which the experience of celebrating the new rite will suggest.

This procedure will clearly show the maternal solicitude of the Church in its desire to give the faithful a liturgical prayer, based on the spiritual roots of the tradition, while at the same time open to renewal and adaptation to its historico-cultural context

In this regard one can never insist enough on the need to introduce, where it does not exist, and to strengthen where it does, the study of the liturgy, especially the Syrian liturgical heritage, according to the best contemporary methods, and also the present-day pastoral exigencies in India. This is especially necessary in seminaries and houses of religious formation. Moreover, importance must be given to the study of the Syriac language, for the purpose of penetrating the heart of the liturgical and patristic sources of the tradition in their full, rich sense. Only through a knowledge of the total ecclesial and theological context of the tradition can the liturgy itself be fully understood. A similar penetration into the meaning of the liturgy should be provided to faithful, according to their needs and circumstances, by means of a precise and regular catechesis. One must not forget the golden principle “*lex orandi, lex credendi*”.

Furthermore, the enclosed *Directives* have been prepared for the celebration of the Qurbana in its Solemn and Simple forms. These directives are based on the text of the Raza as well as on the legitimate pastoral needs of the community.

In giving these directives to the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy, the Holy See is confident that once the present difficulties are overcome, the vital Syro-Malabar ecclesial community will continue to be in all things a model of fidelity, so that, through an organic unity of its multiple riches, drawing inspiration from the spiritual treasures of the liturgy for an ever more active apostolic activity, this Church may continue to enrich the patrimony of the Church Universal by its inexhaustible creativity based on the ever-renewed experience of the grace of Christ the Lord, of the love of God the Father, and of the communion of the Holy Spirit.

And on the venerable Pastors of this Church, called to be witnesses and promoters of unity in every way, I wish to invoke the fulness of spiritual well-being, making my own the very words of the Sacred Liturgy:

“May Christ hear your prayers and receive your Qurbana.

May he make splendid your priesthood in the kingdom of heaven”

(from the Anaphora)

(Sd)

D. Simon Card. Lourdasamy, Prefect

(Sd)

Miroslav S. Marusyn, Secretary

## CONGREGATIO PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS

Prot. No. 955/65

# Directives on the Order of Syro-Malabar Qurbana in Solemn and Simple Forms

### I - Abbreviations

- 1 - The following abbreviations are used in this document:

BC = Official Report of the SMBC, December 2-3, 1986, Section VI Evaluation of the proposals from the members regarding the text of the simple form of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana (numbers refer to the paragraphs).

FJ = Final Judgement of the S. Congregation for the Oriental Churches concerning the Order of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana, 24-7-1985 (numbers refer to the paragraphs).

R = Order for the Solemn Raza of the Syro-Malabar Church, English translation in appendix to the restored Raza of 1986 (numbers refer to pages and lines: e. g. 5:10 = p. 5, line 10).

### II - Introduction

- 2 - The good of the faithful ("bonum fidelium") is the pastoral norm governing all liturgical legislation.
- 3 - The particular liturgical norms governing a Rite exist to preserve intact the substantial unity of the tradition.
- 4 - This does not deprive the local Ordinary of his right and duty to resolve concrete pastoral issues and authorize local customs in the renewed liturgy within the legitimate limits.
- 5 - The moment the new text for the Solemn and Simple forms comes into effect, the use of all other texts previously authorized, including the Missal introduced "ad experimentum" in 1968 and still in use in many dioceses, is "ipso facto" forbidden.
- 6 - In preparing the following directives, an attentive review was made of all the relevant documents of the past decades, including all official and private texts and communications, especially the 1962, 1968, and restored Raza (1986) texts, as well as the proposed Order of the Holy Mass (1981), Observations on the Order of the Holy Mass (1983), a Response to the Observations (1983), Final Judgement (1985), and the Official Report of the SMBC Meeting of December 2-3, 1986.

- 7 - Every attempt was made to accede to all legitimate requests of the Hierarchy, while at the same time preserving intact the fundamental spirit and structure of the rite, according to the express will of the Holy See in countless documents on the subject (cf. FJ 17,47).
- 8 - Where possible, provision was made for options. Other options, adaptations and improvements in the text may be proposed for approval by the SMBC after a five-year period of implementation.
- 9 - a) The text of the *Taksa* or *Order of the Solemn and Simple Qurbana* should be prepared by the SMBC on the basis of the approved *Raza* text and these directives.
- b) As is traditional in the official liturgical books of all rites there should be one single altar Missal for all the forms of the Qurbana (*Raza*, *Solemn*, *Simple*), containing the full text of the liturgy and all rubrics.
- c) This text should be so printed and arranged that the options, rites and formulae that may be omitted when *Raza* is not celebrated, are indicated clearly by the use of smaller type, or by whatever arrangement of the text the SMBC deems most suitable.
- d) An accurate and complete English translation of the proposed text is to be submitted to the Oriental Congregation for final approval not later than December 31, 1988.
- 10 - Preparation should be made to promulgate and introduce this text everywhere by a fixed date (BC 3), not later than three months after the date of the final approval of the text by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.

### III. General Norms

- 11 - The following norms apply to both Solemn and Simple Qurbana unless otherwise indicated.
- 12 - All decisions, permissive or restrictive, contained in FJ and not modified here, remain in force.
- 13 - The use of the veil is left to the discretion of the local Ordinary (BC 17).
- 14 - The dispositions of BC 33-34 for the Liturgy of the Word are approved.
- 15 - At the Liturgy in all its forms, the celebrant(s) come out in procession to the place indicated below.
- 16 - It is laudable that the Liturgy of the Word be celebrated at a bema in the center of the nave, where chairs, a credence for the Gospel lectionary, candles and processional cross, and lecterns can be placed. One possible arrangement is indicated in the schema below.
- 17 - Where the Liturgy of the Word is celebrated on a suitably arranged bema, the clergy, normally, sit as indicated in the schema.



- 18 - To avoid all possible ambiguity, in this Document and in the rubrics of the new text, "right" and "left" refer to the right/left hand of the congregation as they face the sanctuary, as indicated in the schema.
- 19 - The Liturgy of the Word may be celebrated facing the people; for the Liturgy of the Eucharist cfr. No 64.
- 20 - During the diaconal proclamations, litanies, etc., the deacon may face the altar or people, as determined by the local Ordinary.
- 21 - Rubrics for the celebrants and people may be specified as in BC 14, 18-19, 21-22.
- 22 - Silent pauses (BC 9) are permissible according to the principles already established in FJ 24.
- 23 - The response to the three "Peace be with you" greetings (R 25, 42, 60) should remain as in the Raza.
- 24 - Provisions for the adaptation of the prayers (1) concluding the Karozutha, (2) of Thanksgiving after communion, and (3) of the Huttama, may be proposed in the Qurbana to be submitted to the Oriental Congregation for approval (BC 10).
- 25 - The offertory procession of the faithful (BC 50) in use in some regions may be permitted as a popular local custom, but should not be introduced into the liturgical text as an official, common rite.
- 26 - The requests for prayer during the anaphora may be limited to the first (R 46:14-16), (BC 53).
- 27 - Those parts of the eucharistic prayer printed in small type in R from 44:22 up to 51:11 may be made optional.
- 28 - The blessings at the Institution Narrative (R 47) may be reduced to one (BC 56).
- 29 - The Institution Narrative may also be given in Syriac (BC 55).
- 30 - There is to be no elevation at the Institution Narrative (BC 58).
- 31 - The Institution Narrative is not to be singled out in the text by being printed in larger type than the rest of the eucharistic prayer.
- 32 - The anaphoral intercessions may be arranged with responses of the people (BC 59-60), though the approved text (R) is to be followed.
- 33 - At concelebrations these texts may be distributed among the concelebrants, in which case the other priests do not say the prayer but listen silently, praying the intercessions in their hearts.
- 34 - The second paragraph of the intercessory prayer (R 49:9-15) may be printed in smaller type and made optional (BC 61).
- 35 - The deacon's role in the epiclesis (R 50:25-26) is to be kept, as in BC 62.
- 36 - Rubrics and prayers for the incensations are to be incorporated into the text, though smaller type may be used. Incense is used at Solemn Qurbana. Its use is also recommended at Simple Qurbana.

#### IV – The Forms of Qurbana

- 37 – There are three basic forms of Qurbana: Raza, Solemn, Simple.
- 38 – These are not rigid categories or structures, but normative models of varying degrees of solemnity, depending on the circumstances. Thus, for example, a more Solemn Qurbana can include more elements of the Raza, even some of those designated as proper only to the Raza. Incense can be used also at a Simple Qurbana. Raza and Solemn Qurbana are sung. Simple Qurbana can also be sung. Indeed, in accord with traditional eastern usage it is desirable that, where possible, even Simple Qurbana be sung and celebrated with the use of incense.
- 39 – It is highly desirable that on Sundays and feasts, at least the principal Liturgy of the day in each church be some form of Solemn Qurbana.
- 40 – All forms of Qurbana may be concelebrated, though concelebration is especially proper to the bishop's Liturgy, and to the Solemn Qurbana and Raza.

#### V – Particular Norms of the Order of Qurbana

- 41 – The norms in Section VI below apply to both Solemn and Simple Qurbana, except where otherwise specified.
- 42 – Except where otherwise indicated, the options may be listed in order of preference, if the bishops so decide.

#### VI – The Order of Solemn and Simple Qurbana

- 43 – The gifts of bread and wine may be prepared by the priest after vesting, before the Liturgy begins, while the sanctuary curtain, if used, is still closed (see below).
- 44 – The dispositions of FJ 19 regarding the sign of the cross remain in effect (BC 28).
- 45 – The text opens with the “mandatum” and response (R 5: 16-18). This is option a.
- 46 – Option b: a rubric follows indicating that the “mandatum” may be replaced by a suitable greeting and brief introduction (BC 27).
- 47 – The 2nd and 3rd “Glory to God in the highest” may be omitted.
- 48 – Our Father options, to be printed in the following order:
  - a) Our Father with qanona as in R 6-7.
  - b) A rubric indicating that the text may be said without qanona, but always including the final doxology “For yours is the kingdom...” and the final “Our Father in heaven; the heaven and earth ...” (R 6: 26-7:3).
- 49 – “Let us pray” and the prayer- follow, as in R 7-8. These prayers may be adapted (BC 10).
- 50 – a) The Marmitha may be reduced to one psalm, even at the Raza, in accordance with FJ 16.

- b) Any suitable psalm may be chosen.
  - c) At Solemn and Simple Qurbana it may be abbreviated to a few verses.
- 51 - At simple Qurbana the Gospel lectionary may be brought to the place of the Liturgy of the Word in the opening procession, in which case the procession before the Gospel is omitted.
- 52 - a) At Solemn Qurbana the Laku Mara and Trisagion may be done as at the Raza, and this first option should be printed.
- b) Or the psalm verses can be omitted and the chants repeated but once, after "Glory be ... From eternity ...".
- c) At Simple Qurbana these hymns may be sung once, without repetition, without doxology.
- 53 - The prayers before the Epistle, the blessing before OT lesson, the prayers before the Gospel, and the blessing with the Gospel lectionary, may be used as recommended in BC 36, 38-40.
- 54 - Readings at Solemn and Simple Qurbana may be reduced to three or two, depending on the solemnity and occasion. The last reading is always the Gospel.
- 55 - a) If there are three readings, the first must be from OT, the second from the NT apart from the four Gospels, the third from the Gospels.
- b) If there are two readings, the first should normally be from the NT writings apart from the four Gospels (the occasional use of an OT reading is not excluded). It is the responsibility of the SMBC to establish temporary norms for these readings, in accordance with the traditional lectionary system of the Syro-Malabar Rite, until that time when a revised lectionary system is prepared and approved.
- c) Non-biblical readings are not admissable in Qurbana.
- 56 - When there are only two lessons, Surraya is omitted.
- 57 - At Solemn Qurbana, the Gospel procession takes place during the Zummara (R 22), which is always sung. It need be sung only for as long as it is necessary to "cover" this procession. At simple Qurbana, especially when there are no deacons or concelebrating priests to assist, this procession and chant may be omitted as in No 51 above.
- 58 - The dispositions of BC 41-42 are accepted.
- 59 - Karozutha II may be printed in small type as optional (BC 43) except for the final petition and its response ("Let us commend ... To you, O Lord ...": R 29:10-14), which are never omitted. Regarding Karozutha I-II, the dispositions of FJ 25 remain in force.
- 60 - The collect of the Karozutha may be adapted (BC 10).
- 61 - At Solemn and Simple Qurbana the so-called Rite of Dismissal (R 31-32) may be omitted (BC 44).



62 - The Dismissal of the Catechumens may be omitted even at the Raza (R 32:11ff), as in FJ 26.

63 - For the preparation of the gifts (R 28-30, right column), the following options should be given in this order:

- a) before the Liturgy begins, the priest or one of the concelebrants (with the deacon if there is one) prepares the gifts as above, No 43.
- b) If the priest is celebrating alone, or with only one assisting minister in major orders (either a deacon or a concelebrating priest), both bread and wine may be prepared at the left Bethgazza to facilitate their transfer to the altar. Otherwise both Bethgazzas must be used. Here and in the other options below, all the three chalice formulae are to be printed in their present order, as optional variants. Only one, preferably the second ("One of the soldier ..."), need be said. If incense is not used, the incense formulae for chalice and paten are not said. This applies to all options.
- c) When there are at least two other ministers in major orders besides the presiding celebrant, the preparation may be done as in (a), or may be made just before the gifts are brought to the altar before the *lavabo* (R 35) as follows:
  - i. One of the deacons or a concelebrating priest, goes to the left Bethgazza and prepares the bread. Then, taking the paten in his hands, he turns to face the altar and right Bethgazza.
  - ii. Another deacon or a concelebrating priest goes to the right Bethgazza, prepares the chalice, takes it in his hands, and turns to face the altar and left Bethgazza.
  - iii. When both are ready, they proceed to the altar at the same time, saying the accompanying prayers (R 36-37, left column).
  - iv. Then the sacred ministers who have prepared the gifts descend to join the presiding celebrant and other concelebrants at the sanctuary door and, standing facing the altar, accomplish the *lavabo* rite with accompanying formulae (R 35 left column), followed immediately by the rite of the *accessus ad altare* (R 38:1-41:25).
  - v. The presiding celebrant and other concelebrating priests, if there are any, remain at their places as in the Raza rubrics (R 37:28-30) and do not intervene in the preparation and transfer of the gifts.
- d) But if neither of the two assisting ministers in major orders who prepare the gifts is a concelebrating priest, the first prayer of deposition (R 37:1-10 left) is to be said by the presiding celebrant, as follows: just before the *lavabo*, he turns to face the altar and, remaining in his place, says the prayer. Then he proceeds immediately to celebrate the rite of the *accessus ad altare* (R 38ff).

In SHORT, in all of the above options, when the gifts are prepared just before being transferred to the altar, except for the prayer just mentioned (d), the presiding celebrant need take part in the preparation and transfer of the gifts ONLY when there is no other minister in major orders to do this.

- e) In that case, when the priest is celebrating alone with the assistance of neither deacon nor concelebrant – but only in that case – he may first perform the *lavabo* and recite the prayer of entrance to the sanctuary (R 37:28–38:5) as stipulated above (c-iv), then enter to prepare the gifts (R 28–30, right column) on the left Bethgazza (if they were not prepared before the Liturgy), and then transfer them to the altar (R 36–37, left column) before the Creed. The priest then remains at the altar for the Creed and the Prayer of Approach to the Altar (R 40:10ff). In this instance, the order of the preanaphoral rites will be as follows:

Lavabo

Prayer of Entrance into the Sanctuary

(Preparation of the gifts on the left Bethgazza if they were not prepared before the Liturgy)

Transfer and deposition of the gifts

Creed

etc.

- 64 – If the Liturgy of the Word has been celebrated facing the people, it is highly desirable that the sacred ministers turn to face the altar at the *lavabo* (R 35) and maintain this position for the rest of the Qurbana, except where the ritual determines otherwise (e. g. for greetings, blessing; the distribution of communion, final blessing).
- 65 – At Solemn and Simple Qurbana, only as much of the Onitha d-Raze need be sung as is required to “cover” the rite of preparation, transfer, and deposition of the gifts on the altar. It is preferable always, and required at Solemn Qurbana, that at least two strophes, always divided by the “Glory be to the Father ...” be sung, the first strophe that of the feast or feria, the second *ad libitum*, depending on the nature of the celebration.
- 66 – The Nicene Creed maintains its traditional position in the rite of the *accessus ad altare* (R 38–41). It may be omitted at Simple Qurbana on ordinary weekdays, but not on Sundays and holy days.
- 67 – The Karozutha in R 39 is to be part of the text, but may be omitted if there is no deacon. When used, it may be abbreviated – e.g. “Let us pray for the memory of our holy fathers, the faithful rulers, and for who have departed... in true faith. May this Qurbana...”.
- 68 – The Kussapa in R 41 may be made optional.
- 69 – After the first G’hantha and the kiss of peace, the sossapa is removed. Then after the incensation, if there is one, the principal celebrant may proceed directly to the opening greeting of the anaphora dialogue: “The grace ...” (R 44:9–14).
- 70 – The anaphora should be proclaimed aloud so that the people hear it clearly.

- 71 - At concelebrated Qurbana the entire prayer from R 45:3 to 48:10, and the entire epiclesis and concluding doxology (R 50:24-51:1) are to be proclaimed by the presiding celebrant alone, in such a way that only his voice is audible and no other voice is heard murmuring, to interfere with and muffle the proclamation of the prayer.
- This principle holds good for all prayers said aloud during the Liturgy. There is no "ehoral" recitation of any part of the Liturgy by concelebrants, not even the Institution Narrative. Prayers said by the concelebrants are recited "submissa voce", except for the one proclaiming the prayer. The only prayers said aloud and together by all the concelebrants are those they say together with or alternative with the congregation (Our Father, Creed, etc.).
- 72 - The intercessory prayers of the anaphora may be distributed for recitation among the concelebrants, as already indicated above in No 33.
- 73 - The prayer "O Christ, peace of those in heaven above..." (R 51:14-22) may be made optional (BC 63).
- 74 - The penitential psalm may be arranged as proposed in BC 64.
- 75 - The text for the incense rite before communion (R 52:14-53:11) must be given in the book. At a Qurbana celebrated without incense, this text is obviously omitted. At Solemn and Simple Qurbanas where incense is used, the rite may be abbreviated to the blessing of incense and one prayer - e. g. "O Lord our God, fill us with the fragrance of holiness, we who look for and await your mercy".
- 76 - The Qurbana then continues with "Bless us, O Lord ..." (R 53:13ff), and the Onitha, but the kissing of the host and its formula may be made optional (BC 65).
- 77 - The prayer "Glory to you ..." (R 56: 6ff) may be made optional.
- 78 - After "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ..." and the Karozutha (if there is a deacon), the prayer "Blessed are you ..." (R 58) may be made optional (BC 66).
- 79 - The doxology ("For yours is the kingdom ...") and Embolism (R 60:2-9) after the Our Father should not be omitted.
- 80 - Communion at Qurbana in all its forms is normally distributed under both species, except in cases of clear pastoral needs (for example, a large number of communicants, scarcity of wine). Furthermore, it is highly desirable that a sufficient number of hosts be consecrated at each Qurbana so that all communicants receive only from the species consecrated at the very Qurbana in which they are participating, and not from the reserved Eucharist in the tabernacle.

Normally the Sacred Species preserved in the tabernacle are used for devotion to the Eucharistic presence, and for communion outside the Qurbana.

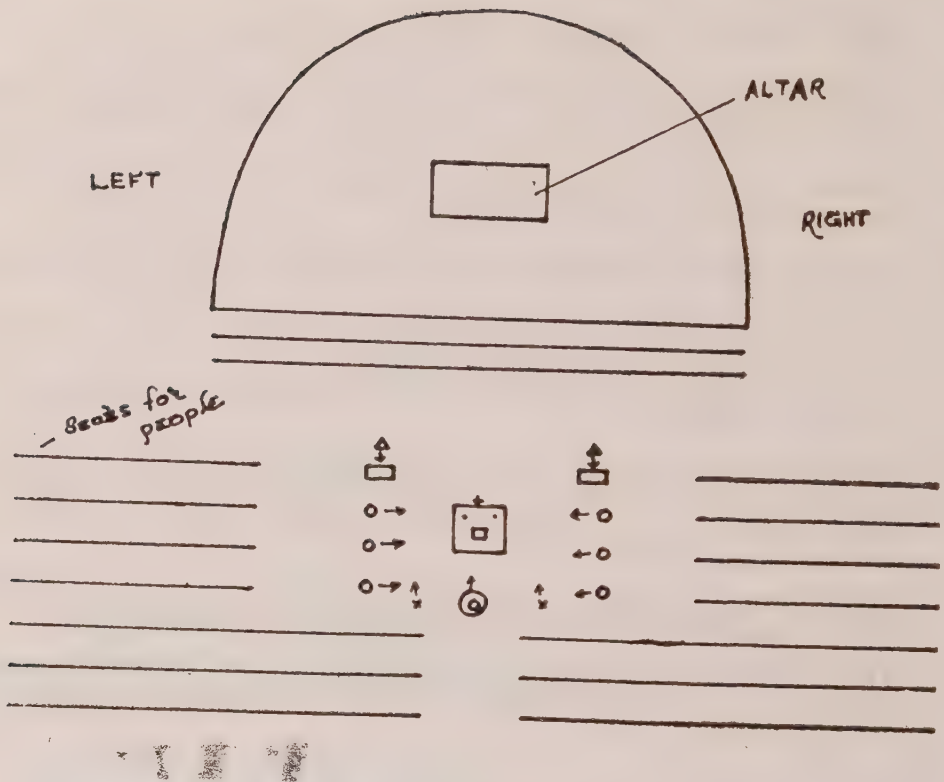
This practice is an ancient tradition and has been recommended by Benedict XIV (*Certiores effecti* No 3) and Pius XII (*Mediator Dei* No 118).



- 81 - Proposals BC 66, 68, 69 are acceptable, though the prayer texts in question should be printed in smaller type, as options.
- 82 - If there is deacon or concelebrating priest(s), the purification of the vessels after communion should not be done by the principal celebrant. This may be done after the Liturgy (see No 84).
- 83 - The three prayers at the purification (R 64: 6ff) may be printed as three options, only one of which need be said.
- 84 - Thus the Rite of Thanksgiving after Communion will have the following structure:
- i. Purification of the vessels with one of the three prayers (R 64: 6ff). This may also be done after the Liturgy.
  - ii. Diaconal proclamations and one of the prayers of Thanksgiving (R (66:16 - 68:6).
- 85 - The final Our Father may be left optional (BC 70), and here the options permitted at the beginning of Qurbana (above No 48) also apply. A rubric at this point may simply refer the celebrants back to the text at the beginning of Qurbana.
- 86 - The Qurbana concludes with one of the blessings, said facing the people with an appropriate gesture of blessing. This may be adapted (BC 10).
- 87 - Then the sanctuary curtain, if used, is closed and the celebrant(s) makes reverence to the altar in whatever manner is customary, saying silently the altar prayer (R 71).

#### **VII - The Malayalam Text (BC 4-6)**

- 88 - The Malayalam text of the liturgy is the competence of the SMBC in consultation with experts in the language and liturgy, and according to the norms enunciated in the accompanying letter on how to proceed in this matter.



- $\Delta$  = Reader
- $\square$  = Lectern
- $\circ$  = Concelebrating priests
- $\odot$  = Presiding Celebrant
- $\times$  = Deacons
- $\rightarrow$  = Direction in which ministers are facing

(This design is not prescriptive, but only illustrative, by way of example)

**The decree of approval of the text of Qurbana in simple and solemn forms with modifications**

PROT. N. 955/65

SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS

## Decretum

Cum ad hanc Congregationem iamdiu pervenisset relatio ab Episcopali Commissione Syro-Malabarensi pro Liturgia redacta de Ordine Qurbana in forma sive solemnī sive simplici persolvendo, attento voto a Conferentia Episcopali Syro-Malabarensi manifestato, omnibus rite perpensis, hoc Dicasterium textui proposito accedit, servatis tamen aliquibus modificationibus in adnexo enucleatic, iisdemque in praefato Ordine inducendis.

Eadem Congregatio pastoralibus inducta rationibus confirmat dispensationes concessas in Normis Directoriis datis die 5 Maii superiore anno, quatenus et ubi diversa consuetudo invaluerit: quae quidem evidenter in ipso Missali inclidi nequeunt.

In huiusmodi terminis haec Congregatio, vigore facultatum a **Summo Pontifice IOANNE PAULO PP II** sibi tributarum, praesenti Decreto Ordinem Qurbana Syro-Malabarensis in forma sive solemnī sive simplici ratum habet.

Novus Ordo modificationibus auctus ab hoc Dicasterio statutis promulgari et in usum ingredi debet die 3 mensis Iulii hoc vertente anno, in festivitate Sancti Thomae Apostoli. Post hunc diem ceteri omnes textus antea adprobati, incluso Missali ad experimentum inducto anno 1968, et adhuc in non paucis dioecesibus usurpato, ipso facto abrogati habeantur.

Editio typica habenda set editio in lingua anglica redacta et ab hac Congregatione adprobata. Pro versione in lingua malayalam et pro quacumque alia huius Ordinis editione eompetens est Conferentia Episcopalis Syro-Malabarensis.

Normae et rubricae circa formam sive solemnem sive simplicem Qurbana extendi nequeunt ad Raza, nisi in casibus expresse recensitis in Normis Directoriis huius Dicasterii.

Huiusmodi textus nullatenus recognoscere poterit quinque ante annos a praesenti dato Decreto. Idem valeat pro textu Raza. Post hoc experimenti intervallum proponi poterunt a Conferentia Episcopali Syro-Malabarensi pro approbatione obtinenda optiones, immutationes et ameliorationes huiusmodi textuum.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus, die 3 Aprilis auno 1989.

(Sd)

D. Simon Card. Lourdasamy, Praefectus

(Sd)

+ Miroslaus S. Marusyn, a secretis



## Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches Decree

As the Report of the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy regarding the Order of the Qurbana in the solemn and simple form had already come to this Congregation, having seen the desire expressed by the Syro-Malabar Episcopal Conference, and having considered everything, this Dicastery acceded to the proposed text, keeping at the same time certain modifications manifested in the attached and to be induced in the proposed order.

The same Congregation, induced by pastoral reasons, confirms the dispensations conceded in the Directorial Norms given on 5th May of last year, as and where a different custom is in vogue which evidently cannot be included in the Missal. In these words, this Congregation, by virtue of the Faculties granted to it by the Supreme Pontiff, John Paul II, ratifies the Order of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana in the solemn and simple form. The new Order given by this Dicastery should be promulgated with the modifications and should be used on 3rd July 1989, feast of St Thomas the Apostle. After this date, all other texts, formerly approved, including the Missal induced in 1968 and used in many dioceses will be abrogated by the very fact.

The typical edition will be the one in English and approved by this Congregation. For the Malayalam version and for any other edition of this Order, the Syro-Malabar Episcopal Conference will be competent.

The norms and rubrics regarding solemn and simple forms of the Qurbana cannot be extended to the Raza except in cases expressly mentioned in the Directive Norms of this Dicastery.

This text cannot be changed absolutely before 5 years from the given Decree. This holds good also for the Raza. After this interval of experiment, options, changes and betterments for of this text could be proposed to the Syro-Malabar Episcopal Conference to get its approbation.

Nothing against this has any value.

Given in Rome from the seat of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, on 3rd April 1989.

(Sd)

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# Some Liturgical Principles Forgotten by the So-Called Syro-Malabar Church

## Introduction

A Church is a community brought together by Christ to celebrate the Eucharist. Unrelated to the celebration of Eucharist there cannot be a Church in the strict sense. Centrality of the eucharistic celebration is fundamental to the very nature and existence of the Church.<sup>1</sup> It decides the ecclesial character and it provides Christian nourishment. Christians form the People of God in the Way of Christ the one and only Priest who is the celebrant of Eucharist beyond time and space. Church is the liturgical assembly of God and His People gathered by Christ, for Christ, in Christ, with Christ. She is the Bride enjoying the banquet of her Bridegroom. All the same she is waiting for the eschatological and full realization of the heavenly banquet.

Second Vatican Council gives a definition of liturgy in biblical and patristic categories: "Rightly, then, the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy, by means of signs perceptible to the senses, human sanctification is signified and brought about in ways proper to each of these signs: in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and

his members."<sup>2</sup> Such an understanding of liturgy is especially in line with the teachings of the Fathers of the Church. The role of the unique Priest is that of Christ and Christ alone. It is a role that cannot be underestimated.

Christ is the celebrant of liturgy and each and every sacrament. His priesthood is the unifying factor which brings together the People of God beyond time and space into a single worshipping community. Concelebration does not mean bringing together of the divided priesthood of Christ. Christ's priesthood is not multiplied; nor is it divided among human priests. Just as sharing in one bread brings together the participants in to the oneness of Christ's body, the participation of one priesthood brings together participants into the oneness of Christ's priesthood.

## Concelebration and Eucharistic Unity

Concelebration is very much promoted in some circles without knowing the proper theological implications involved. Whatever be the present motivation behind the idea of concelebration, what Taft writes is worth pondering: "The presbyterial, co-consecratory concelebration practiced in most Eastern-Catholic traditions has

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1. See my "The Church in the Churches. A Syriac Ecclesiological Perspective", *Christian Orient* 14 (1993), pp. 40-43.
  2. *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979. Conciliar, Papal and Curial Texts* (Collegeville 1982), 1 no 7.

nothing to do with ancient usage, but is derived from more recent developments and is colored by later scholastic sacramental theory of individual priestly sacrifice and the 'special grace' (plus stipend) accruing therefrom. And this is what was instituted for the Roman rite at Vatican II. What is ancient about Eastern eucharistic practice is not its various modes of concelebration, some quite admirable, others less so, but its preservation, by and large, of the ancient ideal of eucharistic unity: one community, one altar, one Eucharist. This is the crux of the matter as I see it today: the Eucharist as sacrament of *koinonia* that is the Church. This is the real issue and it is an ecclesiological one."<sup>3</sup>

A lot of aberrations have crept into the much desirable idea of concelebration. The reasons can be found in the wrong theological perspectives which haunt the minds of some liturgical enthusiasts. Some typical aberrations are pointed out by Taft: "... or worse, when one suddenly sees a hand shoot out from the pews, and a priest attending mass with the faithful begins to mumble the words of institution..."<sup>4</sup> In the Syro-Malabar Church this mumbling is going on! There is even an instruction to the concelebrants to shoot out their hands at the time of institution narrative and epiclesis. It is as if something is lacking in the celebration by Christ the Priest. It seems to proclaim that they, and not Christ, are celebrating on their own. Hands shoot out from every side indicating that the divided priesthood of Christ is once again brought together *ad hoc*, for this or

that particular moment of celebration of the liturgy. What about other moments, one wonders! The pseudo-theology behind the scrupulosity of shooting out of hands demand recital of every prayer by each and every priest. They lack the theology of the unique and undivided priesthood of Christ in which all human priests are united and not divided. Division or unity is the basic problem underlying the whole symbolism.

About the above mentioned parade of division and disunity of Christ's one and only priesthood Taft comments in his own way: "What we are dealing with here (in addition to plain ignorance and bad taste)<sup>5</sup> is a conflict of theologies. It is my own conviction that only a balanced theology of Church can be the guiding norm for the shape of our celebration, and not the 'devotion' or desire or supposed 'right' to 'exercise one's priesthood' or to 'offer sacrifice' or whatever of anyone, priest or otherwise".<sup>6</sup> There is neither any addition nor any subtraction when priests concelebrate.

Eucharist is the basis and reason for the unity of the Church which is the Body of Christ. Eucharist permeates the Body of Christ and builds it up into communion and unity. Thus with Ephrem one can say: the Body (Eucharist) makes the Body (Church).<sup>7</sup> According to Aquinas "the fruit of the Eucharist is the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ... the Eucharist is the sacrament of unity of the Church, which results from the fact that many are one in Christ... It was this *koinonia*, and it alone, that

3. R. Taft, *Beyond East and West. Problems in Liturgical Understanding* (Washington 1984), pp. 89-90.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

5. Bracketed phrase is also from Taft.

6. R. Taft, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

7. See my "An Ecclesiology in the Syriac Tradition", *Communion of Churches*, ed. X. Koodapuzha (Vadavathoor 1993), p. 141.



determined the shape of the Eucharist in the early Church. One community, one table, one Eucharist was the universal rule. And it remains so still in much of the Christian East. A recovery of this vision is the only way out of the devotional narcissism prevalent in Latin priestly spirituality".<sup>8</sup> Taft's description of Latin priestly spirituality is applicable to Syro-Malabar priestly spirituality as well.

In this context one has to disown the non-oriental, untheological practices of Syro-Malabar priests as regards concelebration. Offering as well as consecration of Eucharist is the action of Christ according to Clement of Rome, Justin the Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian, and also in the patristic tradition at large.<sup>9</sup> Christ alone is the one and only Priest in liturgy. That is why Tertullian calls Christ the *Catholicus Patris Sacerdos*.<sup>10</sup> The antiquity and universality of the concept that it is Christ Himself who offers Eucharistic sacrifice is clear from the Fathers of the Church.<sup>11</sup>

Another problem is that of universalizing and absolutizing the Latin liturgical views among the Orientals who have an equally if not more universal, ancient, apostolic tradition. "To maintain that 'verbal' concelebration is the only 'real' one is also to question much of the Eastern tradition... In fact this whole problematic is foreign to a sane liturgical mentality, in which the whole body of presbyters is the moral subject of the

common ministry performed by them *in solidum*. To demand that they all recite certain words together manifests an ignorance of the hierarchical and symbolic nature of sacrament expressed in presence and gesture and witness, as well as in word. Concelebration even in the narrow clerical sense is the common act of a *collegium*, not the synchronization of the sum of the acts of several individuals. Hence even for one with purely 'clerical' concerns, the present Roman rite of verbal co-consecration seems more a denial than a manifestation even of the collegial unity of the presbyterium."<sup>12</sup>

One bread and one body theme is seen in the apostolic times: "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."<sup>13</sup> The unifying and gathering role of the eucharistic bread is emphasized by the liturgical tradition preserved in Didache: "As this broken bread was scattered upon the hills, but was brought together and became one, so let your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever."<sup>14</sup> Just as the Latin Church the Syro-Malabar Church uses one bread for the priest and hundreds for the people, thus destroying the symbolism of eucharistic unity. As the number of priests so too the number of bread; as the number of people so also the number of bread. Breaking one bread and sharing that bread is an authentic eucharistic symbolism neglected by many. The reality

8. R. Taft, *op cit.*, p. 92.

9. Cf. G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London rpt 1954), pp. 253-254.

10. *Adv. Marc.*, 4:9.

11. Cf. C. Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy. A General Treatise on the Theology of the Liturgy* (Collegeville 1976), pp. 260-266.

12. R. Taft, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

13. 1 Cor 10:17.

14. *Didache* 9.

too is not far away from the symbol since the modern society and family is a fractured and fragmented one. But Ignatius of Antioch has this warning: "Be careful therefore to use one Eucharist for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup for union with his blood, one altar, as there is one bishop with the presbytery and the deacons my fellow servants..."<sup>15</sup>

Present-day Latin concept of celebration blindly shared by most of the Syro-Malabar priests is in need of a corrective: "Whether or not I am the presbyter that says the prayer of blessing is irrelevant: to do so is a ministry, not a prerogative."<sup>16</sup> It is Christ and His Body together that celebrates. It is not the privatized personal right of anybody else. The human priests share the role of Head and Body at the same time. Just as the act of celebration, the act of communion too has this Christo-centric, communitarian, Head-Body dimension. "Eucharistic communion... is not just the sacrament of one's personal communion with the Risen Lord. It is rather the sacrament of our communion with one another in the Body of Christ, a body at once ecclesial and eucharistic. That this was the full meaning of eucharistic *koinonia* in the early Church has been shown clearly enough by others."<sup>17</sup>

### Liturgy is not an Appendix of the Church

Liturgy is the *locus* where the work of salvation accomplished by Christ in and through His paschal mystery is

celebrated and participated. It is the here and now application and continuation of the salvation history and paschal mystery. It is precisely for that the Church exists. Liturgy is "the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all the Church's power flows."<sup>18</sup> It is "a *locus theologicus* in which the faith of the Church is expressed and taught."<sup>19</sup> The liturgical assembly is the epiphany of the Church; it reveals what the Church is<sup>20</sup>. The prayers of the liturgy always serve as the guardian of catholic and orthodox faith. So in "controversies with the heretics, the prayer of the liturgy was...invoked... as the expression and witness of the Church's faith."<sup>21</sup>

As a *locus theologicus* the liturgy enjoys a place of pride in the history of Christianity in general. "From the early centuries on, the liturgy enjoyed such unchallenged authority that it was often looked upon as a privileged witness to apostolic tradition...one thing is undeniable: because the liturgy is an institution that is very closely linked to the Church's mission and because it has for its proper purpose to render the mystery of salvation present and active in the Church, it is one of the most reliable expressions of the apostolic tradition that is ever alive in the Church, just as the Mosaic tradition was among the institutions of Israel as these underwent the developments and adaptations required by changing historical situations. (The author of the) adage *Legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi* was merely

15. Philad. 4 = K. Lake, *Apostolic Fathers* I, p. 213.

16. R. Taft, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

18. SC 10; Cf. SC 5-6.

19. A. G. Martimort, et. al. (ed.), *The Church at Prayer. An Introduction to the Liturgy. Vol. I. Principles of the Liturgy* (Collegeville 1987), p. 87.

20. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

summarizing an argument of which St. Augustine, and Tertullian and St. Cyprian before him, had a considerable use. Recourse to the authority of the liturgy has been universal in the Church; in recent times the popes have often appealed to it in the most solemn acts of their supreme teaching office".<sup>22</sup>

The attitude current among some Syro-Malabarians to see liturgy unrelated to Christian spirituality, theology and faith-experience at large is a dangerous tendency that undermines the foundations of an *ecclesia*. Many Syro-Malabar priests and nuns who happened to join Latin dioceses or religious congregations often look down on the Syro-Malabarians and proclaim: "We are Catholics! Any rite is right for us!" A Catholicity that excludes Syro-Malabar Church and its liturgy is not Catholicity. Catholic Church is not the Latin Church. Latin Church or Roman Church is only one of the many Churches that constitute the Catholic Church. The Church exists as Church if only it is to live, propagate, celebrate, nourish, proclaim the Christian faith precipitated in its liturgy. If any rite is right why not the Syro-Malabar rite? Taft narrates an interesting incident: "Several years ago a visitor from Western Europe is said to have asked His Holiness Alexij (d. 1970), Patriarch of Moscow and all the Russians, how he would define the Russian Orthodox Church. The late patriarch replied, 'A Church that celebrates the Divine Liturgy' ... It simply indicates the overriding role played by liturgy in the life of the Christian East: the Eastern Church is before all else a Church that keeps vigil before God, celebrating the mysteries of his Son

in the age-old rites passed on by the fathers in the faith... for the Eastern Christians, worship is the supreme crystallization of their faith".<sup>23</sup> Supreme crystallization of faith of Christians is perhaps of no consequence in the opinion of some so-called Syro-Malabar liturgiologists? They have started arguing that Syro-Malabar Church is neither Eastern nor Western. Here they are simply misled by the European categorization of Churches into Latin West and Greek East and miserably fail to see a Syriac Orient.

The inner relation between faith and liturgy cannot be neglected. "*Lex orandi, lex credendi*—the manner in which prayer is said in the liturgy indicates what must be believed, and that which must be believed influences the manner of praying. The liturgy is, or involves, a certain way of proposing the faith to the adherence of the faithful, and is, or involves, a certain expression of this faith by the magisterium and by the people. The liturgy, it may be added, is a manifestation of the ordinary magisterium of the Church".<sup>24</sup> The Syro-Malabar Church cannot deny the East Syrian connection. The historical, theological, liturgical, spiritual, ecclesiastical relations between East Syriac Church and Mar Thoma Nazranis of pre-sixteenth century are undeniable. It cannot be equated with Latin colonization of later times. What Taft says of Christian East is equally, if not more, applicable to Syro-Malabar Church. "But as is often the case in matters liturgical, it is the East Syrian... Church of Persia that reflects the earliest usage and best understanding of what it is all about".<sup>25</sup> To claim that Mar Thoma Nazranis had their own developed liturgy before the East Syrian connections is only

22. *Ibid.*, p. 277.

23. R. Taft, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

24. C. Vagaggini, *op. cit.*, pp. 509-510; Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 529-531.

25. R. Taft, *op. cit.*, p. 105.



wishful thinking and clear anachronism. Liturgies did not develop in theological vacuum. Even today Mar Thoma Nazranis-Catholic as well as non-catholic, Orthodox as well as non-orthodox-do not form theological Churches in the strict sense. Theological understanding of all Mar Thoma Nazranis is an imported one and an accepted one. It is not their own making in the past.

### The Liturgical Existence of the Church

The central, unifying and foundational role of liturgy is an accepted fact among main stream Christian Churches in general. "The Eastern Churches for the most have remained faithful to the liturgical spirit of the golden age of the Fathers, when pagan society became christendom by the saving power of the Word and Sacrament celebrated in the liturgical assembly. In a very real sense the whole life of the Church in the patristic period was 'liturgical'."<sup>26</sup> The very survival of Churches as Churches depends on its life of liturgy, celebration of liturgy, because Church is by its very nature the liturgical assembly. "But as long as they are free to participate in the worship of their local church, the Eastern Christians can survive. As long as the mysteries can be celebrated the Church lives, held together not by organization nor authority nor education, but by communion year after year in the regular cycle of feast and fast... As the late Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad once said, 'Our salvation rests on our fidelity to our cultic forms'".<sup>27</sup> Fidelity to the celebration of one's faith-life is not a dispensable appendix. It is a

matter of Kierkegaardian sincerity to one's own conscience, inner self, heart, heritage of faith. Nor it is an ornament, luxury or matter of public opinion. Rather it belongs to the core of our being Christian. Hammond would say: "for the Greek Christians the Gospel is inseparably linked with the liturgy that is unfolded week by week in his parish church. Not among the Greeks only but throughout Orthodox Christendom the liturgy has remained at the very heart of the Church's life."<sup>28</sup> What Hammond speaks of Greek and Orthodox tradition is true of Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopic traditions. How can Mar Thoma Nazranis be an exception to this general rule and still claim to be a Church? But according to Taft "the post-patristic period (of the Western Church) is a dialectic of extremes".<sup>29</sup> Perhaps the Mar Thoma Nazranis of the Syro-Malabar Church share the heritage of such a Western Church?

Faith of the Fathers is what is handed down to the post-patristic Churches not excluding the Latin Church which became the least patristic and least liturgical Church later. "An attachment to tradition, to the ways handed down from time immemorial by their fathers in the faith is evident in every aspect of church life in the East, but above all in worship... The security that comes from praising God in forms that were known to Basil the Great and John Chrysostom might be taken as a sign of stagnation. But the liturgiologist, driven frantic trying to trace the vagaries of liturgical development in an Eastern liturgy, can only be amused at the accusations of immobilism

26. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

28. P. Hammond, *The Waters of March. The present state of the Greek Church* (London 1956), p. 52.

29. R. Taft, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

thrown up against the Eastern rites. In reality there has always been slow, almost imperceptible growth and change. However, it is less easy for the historian to observe, since it has been a natural process, not accomplished by *fiat* from above. Growth through gradual changes that are in themselves insignificant may be less dramatic than periods of imposed uniformity followed by sudden, committee-programmed reform – but it is certainly more natural”.<sup>30</sup>

### Reforming like the Latin Church?

Whatever be the theological upheavals that resulted from Vatican II, basically it was more Latin rather than Catholic in its theological approaches. This is but natural if only one thinks of the Latin participants of the Council with their pre-Vatican apprehensions about Churches other than Latin. Orientals were tolerated to some extent. The Council did not go far enough to place Oriental Churches on equal footing with the Latin Church. Even today the mainstream theology that leads the Latin Church is more Latin rather than Catholic. Only the Oriental Churches can make the Latin Church less Latin and more Catholic.

Where do the Orientals stand? Those Orientals which are in communion with Rome are consciously and unconsciously latinized to the detriment of mainstream Catholic concepts. Those Orientals who are not in communion with Rome do not recognize their fellow Orientals whom they look down upon as uniates – a term that has no place in the theological vocabulary of balanced ecumenical dialogue. Otherwise there should be also some deviates! The Syro-Malabar

hybrid church provides the best example for anti-catholic latinization in the past as well as in recent times. The Chaldean and Maronite Churches too are examples in this respect. As some Syro-Malabar liturgiologists fear the ‘chaldeanization’ of their liturgy, they forget the fact that Chaldean Church is a latinized and latinizing church in the past few centuries. Authentic renewal of Syro-Malabar Church cannot be talked of in terms of chaldeanization or non-chaldeanization.

There are some enthusiasts who go after popular and unscholarly ends in liturgical renewal. Taft notes the Western tendency to ‘reform’ Eastern rites, universalizing and applying the limited Western experience of liturgical reform. “Contrary to what is popularly thought, the liturgical reforms of Vatican II were not a universally applicable Catholic response to the exigencies of modern life, but are rather the product of the peculiar history of the Roman Rite in the post-patristic era. Liturgical stability in the West was achieved much later than in the East... This post-Tridentine liturgical situation was a Western innovation foreign to the experience of Eastern Christendom. There is no such thing as a ‘typical’ liturgical book of any Eastern Rite. And no Eastern Church has ever imposed a liturgy of which neither jot nor tittle could be changed without approval from above... This does not mean, however, that Eastern liturgy, is at the mercy of individual caprice, as happened in the West when liturgical law was relaxed at Vatican II. In the East the alternative to an imposed legalism and rubricism is not anarchic individualism but spontaneous fidelity to the common tradition.”<sup>31</sup>

30. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

It is precisely this spontaneous fidelity that is lacking among the Syro-Malabarians. Post-patristic Latin Church thinks in terms of extremes: either legalistic rubricism or anarchic privatization. It is wanting in spontaneous continuity and fidelity to tradition.

### Privatization and Participation

The privatization tendency of sacraments is a theological catastrophe that befell the Latin Christendom-Protestant as well as Catholic. Individualism was upheld to the extreme by protestantism. So rubricism and rigidity swayed the Roman Catholic liturgical consciousness. "The Latin Church since the Middle Ages has suffered a gradual privatization of the Eucharist into a personal devotion of the priest, who had 'his' daily mass, and a monasticization of matins and vespers, formerly the morning and evening prayer of the whole Christian community...It goes without saying that 'private mass' is foreign to the Eastern spirit, and concelebration is practiced as a manifestation of the unity of the local church in one Eucharist, not in order to provide presbyters with the opportunity of satisfying their private devotion while avoiding the abuse of private or even solitary masses... Even the Liturgy of the Hours has remained an integral part of the full office of parochial worship on Sundays and feasts. Rather than reduce the liturgy to a more manageable length and then multiply masses to accommodate several shifts, the Eastern Church has striven to maintain the liturgical cycle of vespers, matins and Eucharist in all its solemnity as the patrimony and responsibility of the parish community, and not a monastic preserve, much less the

performance of a coterie of professional initiates like the cathedral canons that still maintain the office in some basilicas in the West."<sup>32</sup> The Syro-Malabarians are trying to cut their liturgy to suit the longer novenas, sermons, etc; they incorporate Latin rite prayers and rubrics removing their proper liturgical prayers which are a bit longer at times. The liturgical evils mentioned by Taft in the light of Latin-type renewals, are readily seen in the Syro-Malabar Church.

Another recent false perception of some latinized and latinizing Syro-Malabar liturgiologists, is about popular participation. For them participation means seeing the eucharistic bread, the priest always facing the people during liturgy, lack of veil in front of the Holy of Holies, concelebrants reciting some prayers like the words of institution together with the celebrant, offering a lot of non-eucharistic articles, etc. Thus, what Taft speaks of a sister tradition is not without relevance in this case: "So, contrary to what one would expect, the Eastern rites for all their complex ritual splendor and magnificent vestments, their beards and brocade, clouds of incense and endless monastic chants, are far less clericalized than liturgy in the West before Vatican II... True, there is the iconostasis or barrier that encloses and to a certain extent hides the sanctuary from the people in many Eastern traditions. But we must not reduce popular participation to seeing, because Eastern liturgy is always sung: there is no such thing as 'low mass'. And the deacon, standing at the head of the congregation before the central doors of the iconostasis, forms a bridge between the people and the holy of holies..."<sup>33</sup>

32. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.



An unnecessary and unedifying controversy regarding the celebrant of Eucharist facing the altar or facing the people is going on in the Syro-Malabar Church. The controversy without solid theological substance is another sign of Latin influence and nothing else. How can participation be the same as seeing the host? Participation is communion and it is on the inner, deeper, spiritual, personal level as a result of faith and prayer. What do the naked eyes see behind the veil? Another veil covering the tabernacle. And behind the veil the eyes find the doors of the tabernacle. Open it and see a metal vessel. Inside that all that the naked eyes see is a piece of bread! Is that all the participant can see and want to see? There is a sight that is different in the absence of which there is no participation. Whether one sees the piece of bread or not one has to see Christ. Eyes of faith, eyes of the heart, eyes of the spirit become a must, an absolute must for participation. It is not seeing any particular created thing with naked eyes.

The contrast of Latin and Oriental approaches to eucharistic celebration is further highlighted by Taft: "Furthermore, there are - at least ideally - no pews, so the congregation is not locked into the audience-stage arrangement that has become the almost exclusive liturgical disposition of the Western Church. Consequently not just the sanctuary but the whole church is 'liturgical space'."<sup>34</sup> The priest is at times in the middle of the church. How many Syro-Malabar churches have *bema* in the middle? Without *bema* how can there be a proper liturgical celebration in that non-Latin Church? How can there be ideal processions with the gospel without having a *bema* in the middle?

A series of appearances by the clergy inside the veil and outside the veil, their movements from the *bema* to the altar, turning towards the people for blessings, incensing, reading the Scriptures, preaching, asking prayers, bringing communion, etc. avoid the 'audience-stage arrangement' of Latin tradition.

Awe and wonder leading to adoration, praising the Divine mystery are characteristics particular to liturgy in biblical and patristic times. Oriental liturgies have kept up that sacred heritage for us. "For the Eastern Christian, the Latin's claim to gaze on the Lord, to be admitted at any moment to his presence, is indeed an extraordinary one. In the East the throne must be viewed from afar... But this sanctuary barrier (be it iconostasis or veil) which cuts off the altar from our view is not a hindrance to popular participation in the mysteries of the liturgy, but rather an aid, an aid to the Eastern spirit of worship. For Eastern devotion is aroused by concealment as well as exposition, and the doors and veils of the iconostasis are not only to hide, but also to reveal... It is not a barrier but a symbolic gateway into the kingdom of heaven, presented here below in mystery."<sup>35</sup>

### Liturgy is Our Spirituality

Liturgy is the spirituality of the Church. It is the historical extension of the salvation in Christ. Time and timelessness, space and spacelessness meet and merge there. Heaven and earth become one reality. There is no private Christian spirituality. Spirituality is the Christian way of life and it is communitarian. "The sanctification of the Church in the liturgy is nothing else but the Christification or the paschalization of the world, effected

34. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 121-122.

by Christ the Lord, Mediator and Priest, in the progressive assimilation of the world to Himself".<sup>36</sup> Communion with God and communion with humanity is perfectly realized in Christ and by Christ. The same Christ is born in us in and through baptism and nourished by the Eucharist. Sanctification and liturgy are sides of the same coin. Vagaggini writes: "the liturgy is nothing but the realization from Pentecost to the parousia of the meaning of sacred history under the veil of the sensible and efficacious signs of sanctification and of worship".<sup>37</sup>

Liturgy too is not a private affair; it is a public concern. "Liturgy then is the common work of Christ and his Church... For the liturgy is the efficacious sign of Christ's saving presence in his Church... This common celebration of our salvation in Christ is the most perfect expression and realization of the spirituality of the Church".<sup>38</sup> Liturgy and spirituality are inseparable entities. Both have a communitarian dimension that rules out privatization. Liturgical spirituality is not one among many other schools of spirituality admitted or even recommended by the Church; much less it is to be identified with Benedictine spirituality. No, liturgical spirituality is the spirituality of the Church by a title which is suitable to none other".<sup>39</sup>

Reverential fear and contemplation of the mystery are essential attitudes in our liturgical spirituality. Liturgy is not just any kind of prayer, just a type of ceremony. It is the prayer proper in the real Christian

sense. It is the *locus* for theology as well as spirituality. "The East has never known the separation of spirituality, theology and ecclesiology from liturgy, with the consequent degeneration of piety into individualism finding its expression in private prayer, meditation, and devotions in the face of inaccessible, clericalized public rites".<sup>40</sup> Clericalization is a non-oriental, Latin problem after the patristic period. All the oriental liturgies divide the prayers for lay people, deacons, concelebrants, etc. It is not a one-man-show as in the case of pre-Vatican (and even post-Vatican!) Latin rite where often the only prayer of lay people is an Amen! The present writer has often observed that even that Amen is recited by the celebrant because most of the people ignore that as a negligible appendix.

Facing the people will not increase popular participation in liturgy. The Latin World has lost a sense of the sacred, a sense of the mystery. Here both Protestant and Roman Catholic groups come under the Latin world. There liturgy often seems to be mere verbalism, rubricism and theological formulas devoid of reverential fear and dynamic inner life and sense of celebration.

#### A Church without a Name and Identity?

Nearly six decades have elapsed since the beginning of the efforts of Syro-Malabar liturgical reforms. Disputes and not discussions that we witness there.<sup>41</sup> Personality clashes are not uncommon. All these are calling into question the real identity of

36. C. Vagaggini, *op. cit.*, pp. 266-267.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

38. R. Taft, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-130.

39. C. Vagaggini, *op. cit.*, p. 675; Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 647-739.

40. R. Taft, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

41. Malabar Study Forum, *The Present Liturgical Crisis in the Syro-Malabar Church* (Rome 1989), pp. 1-40.

the so-called Syro-Malabar Church. It is in search of its real name and identity. Liturgical hybridization is very much in vogue. Pseudo-liturgiologists and their quasi-liturgical tendencies get the upper hand. "God save us from experts!", cried *three times* by an anti-oriental liturgiologist (?) an year ago during the gathering of liturgical scholars called together by proper authorities of the Syro-Malabar Church. Why did he cry three times (like orientals), thus contradicting his own liturgical principle of non-repetition of prayers? It is blatantly funny that those who claim to stand for 'indianizing' the liturgy do not realize that repetition of prayers is natural to Indian mentality. So under the cover of some popular slogans they are really against what they outwardly claim to stand for.

Almost everything in the Syro-Malabar Church is *ad experimentum*!

Inconsistencies and contradictions in the policy of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, as regards liturgical reforms have always added fuel to the uncertainty and liturgical chaos of this most latinized and least theological Church in the history of Christianity. Past four hundred years of latinization cannot be eradicated all on a sudden. A re-orientalization lasting for the coming four centuries is the only solution. Those who cannot accept it could easily be assimilated into the Latin Church as in the past or even at present in the Kalyan eparchy!. Let those Orientals who are not in communion with Rome think twice about the Syro-Malabar experience of which Kalyan case is just a single example in a series of similar anti-oriental policies.

Koonammakkal Thoma Kathanar



## MODIFICATIONS<sup>1</sup>

### Concerning "The general Instructions regarding the Order for the Qurbana of the Syro-Malabar Church"

- 1 In order to avoid all misunderstanding, N. 11<sup>2</sup> should read: "In the absence of deacons, those of lower Orders may take their place, except in the execution of those rites and ministries which by their very nature are traditionally reserved to Ordained deacons, as in no. 24 below, or in the rite of communion, when the deacon receives the Eucharist with the clergy in major orders".
- 2 In N. 14<sup>3</sup>, the final sentence is to be suppressed.
- 3 N. 22 is to be rephrased as follows: "Normally a sufficient number of hosts are to be consecrated at each Qurbana so that all communicants can receive from the species consecrated at the very Qurbana in which they are participating".
- 4 N. 23 should read: "Communion has to be distributed under both species, except where circumstances render this impossible or gravely inconvenient".

### Concerning "The Directive for the Qurbana in Solemn and Simple Forms"

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1. This document issued on April 3, 1989 is already discussed in detail by Dr. Thomas Mannoranparampil in *Christian Orient* Vol. X, No. 2 of June 1989. For the sake of clarity we again give the articles in the *Draft* which are modified, omitted or suppressed. These "*Modifications*" were sent by the Congregation for Oriental Churches along with the decree of the approval of the text of the Qurbana in its simple and solemn form prepared according to the *Directives* of 1988 May 5. (Editor)
2. Draft n. 11: "In the absence of deacons, those of lower Orders may take their place. If even these latter are not available, those who have no Holy Orders also may assist the celebrant, but they should be vested in Kotina and Zunara".
3. *Draft n. 14*: While making the sign of the Cross on himself, the celebrant raises his right hand just above the head and makes the sign of the cross over himself by moving his hand first down to his breast saying "now" then moving it to the right shoulder saying "always" and finally to the left shoulder saying "forever". If a different custom prevails, he can move the hand **first** to the left and then to the right.

- 5 N.1<sup>4</sup> is to be omitted.
- 6 The first sentence of N. 5 is to be rephrased as follows: "Any suitable psalm may be chosen for the Marmitha". The intention is not to replace the Marmitha, but to expand its repertory of psalms and to permit its abbreviation.
- 7 N. 7<sup>5</sup> is to be suppressed.
- 8 The second sentence of N. 13 should be modified to read as follows: "The petitions of the first Karozutha after the Gospel may be multiplied or abbreviated. But petitions 1-7 and the final petition (save us all O Christ... Have mercy on us O Lord) must be retained." The concession to abbreviate and/or provide options in the litany is not meant to destroy the basic structure of the intercessions or prayers of the faithful which must always begin with the general petitions for the basic needs of the Church and humanity.
- 9 N. 14<sup>6</sup> must be suppressed.
- 10 N. 19<sup>7</sup> should be made explicit by adding the phrase "...weekdays, but never on sundays or holy days of obligation".

#### Concerning the "Particular directives for concelebration"

- 11 In N. 5, it would be preferable to remove from the list of prayer to be distributed among the concelebrants, and reserve to the presiding celebrant, at least the concluding portion of the prayer after communion - i.e. the third from the last ("May Christ Our God, Our Lord, Our King and Saviour ...") and the last ("O Christ, hope of mankind...") prayers in the list of N. 5.
- 12 In N.8<sup>8</sup>, omit the phrase "Join the main celebrant in the blessing and". Such gestures of blessing are to be made by the presiding celebrant alone.

#### Concerning "The Order of the Raza"

- 13 The brackets should be removed from around the dialogue in OR 35 A: 1-10, which should be said also at simple Qurbana.
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4. *Draft n. 1:* "The sign of the Cross at the beginning of the liturgy, where it is already in general use may be continued".
  5. *Draft n. 7:* "The liturgy of the Word may be celebrated facing the congregation. For the rest of the Qurbana, it is highly desirable that the sacred ministers face the altar".
  6. *Draft n. 14:* "The offertory procession of the faithful in use in some regions may be continued".
  7. *Draft n. 19:* "The Creed may be omitted at the simple Qurbana on ordinary week day".
  8. *Draft n. 8:* "At the words of institution the concelebrants *join the main celebrant in the blessing and* stretch out the right hand with the palm opened upwards, at the Epiclesis they stretch out the right hand with the palm opened downwards".



## Book Review

**Paul Pallath**, *The Synod of Bishops of Catholic Oriental Churches*, Rome: Mar Thoma Yogam (The St. Thomas Christian Fellowship), 1994, XV + 234 pp., Paperback L. it. 25,000 [Available at Liberia Leoniana, Via dei Coprriori 16/28, 00193 Roma, Italy].

The publication of the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* (CCEO) gave rise to many studies on the different aspects of Church legislation. This book, based on the author's doctoral dissertation at the Pontifical Institute of Oriental Studies in Rome, contains the first comprehensive study on the synodal structure of the Churches of oriental tradition in communion with the bishop of Rome, commonly called «Catholic Oriental Churches». With satisfaction, we state that P. Pallath is not giving only a mere comment on the pertaining canons, but attempts, in the first part, to explain the theological foundation of synodical structure: having defined the nature and concept of synodality, he concentrates his attention at the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II, the collegiality of bishops and the principle of subsidiarity. Vatican II's communion ecclesiology is, as the author currently shows, much indebted to orthodox theology. This statement allows us to express here our appraisal of the, though not complete, bibliography, preceding the study itself. The author analyses in a second chapter the canonical legislation of the first eight centuries concerning the synodal structure, shows the different kinds of synods, the establishment of the principle of primacy as well as the relationship between synodality and primacy. These preliminary explanations are in fact helpful for the understanding of the contents of the present oriental canonical legislation promulgated by Pope John Paul II. Nevertheless one must always have in mind that this legislation (CCEO) is rather a papal code *for* than a code *of* the oriental churches in communion with the Roman Pope. Part Two deals with the structure and organization of the synod of bishops, its major powers, and its rights and obligations. The different kinds of synods according to Pius XII's *Motu proprio Cleri sanctitati* form the point of departure. Thereupon the work of the revision is presented, before the author comes to an evaluation of the major powers, the rights and obligations of the synod of bishops in patriarchal and (major) archiepiscopal churches. The third part is of particular interest to those Churches *sui iuris* which do not have the rank of patriarchate or major archiepiscopate, especially the (Ethiopian, Syro-Malankara, Ruthenian) Metropolitan Churches. They do not have a synod of bishops, but only a *council of bishops* with restricted powers. The author shows the similarities and differences in the exercise of the major powers. The last chapter of his book confronts the synod of bishops of oriental churches *sui iuris* and the Bishops' Conferences of the Roman Catholic (»Latin«) Church (CIC cc. 447-459). Here he also gives at first a historical survey regarding these conferences. While appreciating the progress made in the CCEO regarding synodal governance, the author does not overlook the problems and challenges the Catholic Oriental Churches will have to face also in future. We hope this work will find due attention, especially among the oriental churches in India; which do not possess a proper oriental synodal experience.

John Madey



# News

## **1. Ecumenical Symposium of the Church of the East in the Sasanian Empire**

The PRO ORIENTE Consultation on "Orthodoxy and Catholicity in the Syriac Tradition, with the Special Attention to the Theology of the Church of the East in the Sasanian Empire" was held in Vienna from June 24-29, 1994. In her request to promote theological understanding and ecumenical relations among the apostolic Churches, PRO ORIENTE foundation had invited to Vienna the representatives of Eastern Catholic, Oriental Orthodox and Assyrian Churches namely all who share a common ecclesial heritage in syriac language and in tradition. Representatives of these Churches, bishops and theologians have, for the first time in the history of their Churches, come together in a context such as this. Present there were also the staff of PRO ORIENTE, expert scholars on the theology and historians of these Churches and a representative of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Rome.

They discussed elaborately about the Trinitarian and Christological dogmas. They admitted humbly that the differences in the theological interpretation of the mystery of incarnation of Christ was due to the different theological schools of thought. They expressed unanimously the ardent hope in exploring the theological principles at "pluralistic dogmatic expression in one and the same faith" and thereby becoming united in one communion of faith and love.

## **2. His Grace Mar Joseph Powathil, "Honorary Member" of PRO ORIENTE**

His Grace Mar Joseph Powathil, Metropolitan Archbishop of Changanacherry of the Syro-Malabar Church, has been named the "Honorary Member" of the PRO ORIENTE. The decision was taken in its meeting held in Vienna from June 24-29, 1994.

## **3. Member of Pontifical Commission**

His Excellency Mar Kuriakose Kunnachery, Bishop of Kottayam of the Syro-Malabar Church, has been nominated by His Holiness Pope John Paul II as a member of the Pontifical Commission for Inter-religions Dialogue.

## **4. Pope welcomes the delegation from Patriarchate of Constantinople**

His Eminence Athanasios, the Orthodox Metropolitan, representing the Patriarch of Constantinople, visited the Holy Father on June 28, 1994. The occasion was the Feast of Peter and Paul, the Patron Saints of the Church of Rome. In his speech of welcome to the delegation, Pope John Paul II said that Peter and Paul were brothers in their own ways. They were different in background and in their spiritual history. They even clashed, but had one ambition; "to please the Lord". Their origins divided them, but their mission united them.

The Holy Father also referred to the division existing between the Latin Church and the Orthodox Church and to the need of unity between the two. He said "... I am convinced that we must do everything to resolve the concrete difficulties that may arise and to continue the theological dialogue... Experience also shows that the theological dialogue lays the foundations for a new common life and can enable the practical obstacles that still exist to be overcome". The Pope concluded his speech hoping that the dialogue towards unity will continue.

## COMMENTARY OF THE CODE OF CANONS OF THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES by Victor J. Pospishil

### INDIAN EDITION

We are very happy to inform you that the OIRSI has been officially authorized by the Saint Maron Publications Brooklyn, New York, to reprint an Indian edition of the Commentary of CODE OF CANONS FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES.

This Indian edition will be reproducing the same text recently published (1993), with the Imprimatur † of Archbishop Francis M. Zayek, Bishop of saint Maron, U. S. A.

As the foreign edition is very expensive about Rs. 1300.00 we consider it a great service to bring out an Indian edition of the same book with the same page numbers. The OIRSI offers at a very low cost of Rs. 225 per copy. As the preliminary work has already started and the number of copies had to be approximately fixed those who give orders first will have priority.

#### *Details of Book*

Title	: EASTERN CATHOLIC CHURCH LAW-COMMENTARY		
Author	: Victor J. Pospishil	Pages	: 740
		Price	: Rs. 225
Size	: Demy 1/8	Date of Publication	: Oct. 30, 1994
Paper	: Maplitho-best quality		
Binding	: Full calico with screen printing	Postage extra	Rs. 20/- per copy

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